EXCLUSIVE: THE DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MOVIE! P.62

DRAGON

YOUR OFFICIAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MAGAZINE

DWARVES!

- *Speak the Language*
- *Get the Gadgets*
- *Learn the Lore*
- *Scream the Battle-Cries!*

Paint Like A Pro

Games Workshop Veteran Mike McVey Shows You How

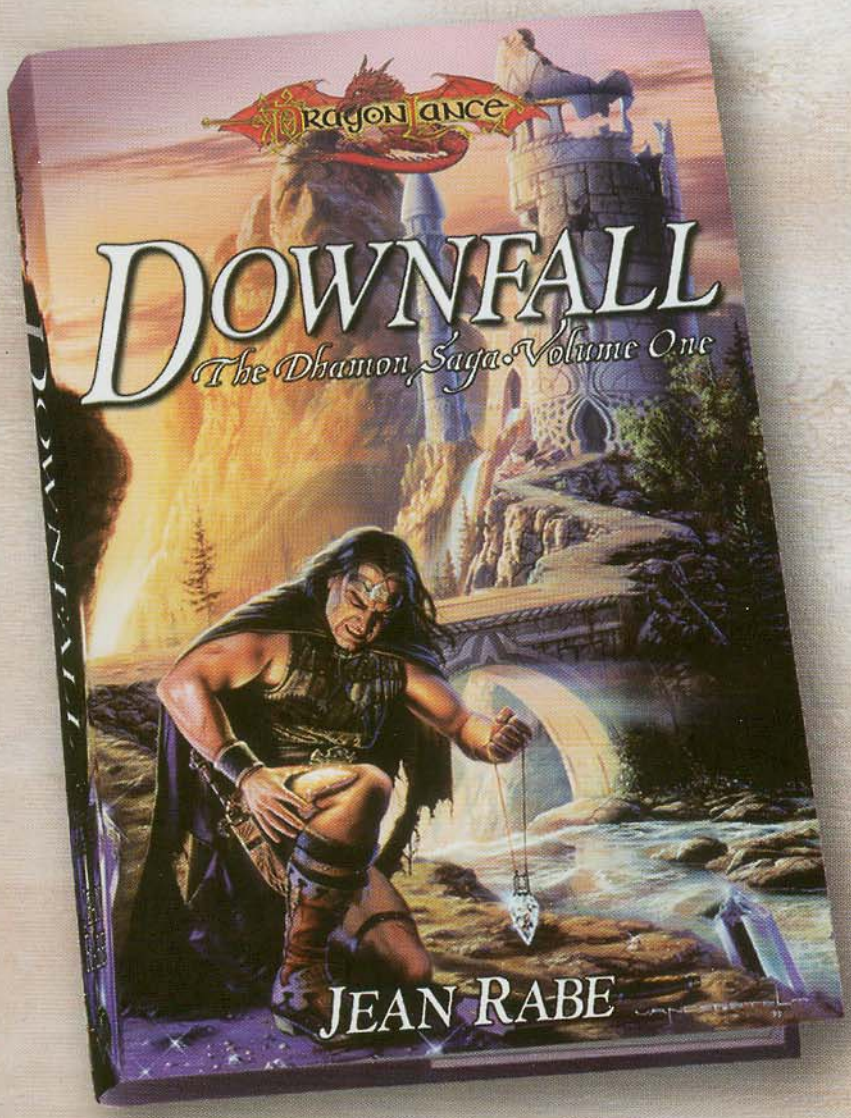
GREYHAWK FICTION

Keoland Blues, by Paul Kidd

DRAGON ISSUE 278
$4.99US $6.99CAN
12
DECEMBER 2000
7 25274 01823 9

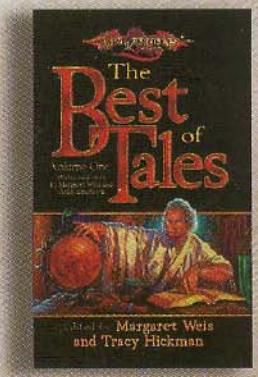
PLUS: Vs. Duergar • Volo in Connyr • Rogues of Ravens Bluff • Dork Tower • Dungeoncraft • The Stonelord Prestige Class • Sage Advice • Nodwick

Imagine your worst day.
Not even close to what he's going through.

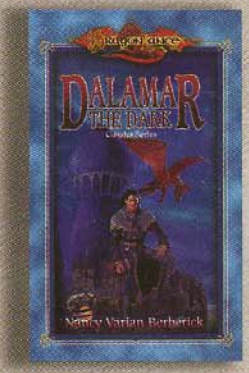


Sequel to the Dragons of a New Age Trilogy
Downfall: The Dhamon Saga • Volume One
ISBN 0-7869-1572-2

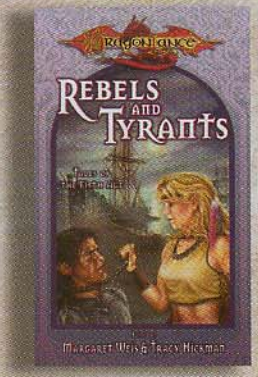
Look for these novels at better book and hobby stores everywhere.



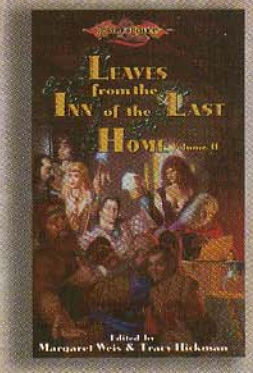
The Best of Tales
0-7869-1567-6



Dalamar the Dark
0-7869-1565-X



Rebels & Tyrants: Tales of the Fifth Age
0-7869-1676-1



More Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home
0-7869-1516-1

Adventure so vivid, we suggest you keep a sword nearby.

DragonLance®

Wizards of the Coast

All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.

www.wizards.com/books

-STAPLES

Dragon Issue 278
December 2000

GAME ROOM

What's new, what's happening, and what's on your mind.

Wyrm's Turn 8
Scale Mail 16
Profiles 16
Convention Calendar 28
Previews 30
Countdown 34

FEATURES

New rules, campaigns, and idea generators.

A Short History of Dwarves 40
Kenneth Hite

A Dwarven Lexicon 44
Sean K Reynolds

Cry Havoc! 48
Owen K.C. Stephens

Forge and Hammer 52
Wolfgang Baur

Lights, Camera, Dragons! 62
Cory Herndon

The Old Words are the Best Words 68
Robin D. Laws

Class Combos 2: Dwarves 72
James Wyatt

Keoland Blues 76
Paul Kidd

Dwarven Gizmos 84
Jesse Decker

FAMILIARS

Humor, puzzles, monsters, magic, and more.

Dork Tower 36
Mind Flayers 83
Nodwick 86
New Adventures of Volo 88
Vs. 91
Class Acts 92
Rogues Gallery 94
Dragonmirth 99
What's New 114

WIZARD'S WORKSHOP

Tools, tricks, and tactics to improve your game.

PC Portraits 38
Forum 100
Role Models 102
Sage Advice 104
Silicon Sorcery 108
Dungeoncraft 110

Gruff, proud, and stubborn to a fault, Greg Staples's dwarven hero stands vigilant at the border of his homeland. Greg mentioned to me that he'd just been back from visiting a friend in Scotland and the Highlands had invited visions of dwarves marching over the cold, rolling hills.

Our dwarven friend is armed to the teeth and adorned with copious skulls, yet there is an unmistakable air of deeply-hidden good about him. It's as if he keeps an epic log of injustices done to his people within his mind and is eagerly flipping through its pages looking for your name.

—Peter Whitley, Art Director

Dragon Magazine (ISSN# 0279-6848) is published monthly for $34.95 per year by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Ave. SW, Renton, WA 98055, United States of America. Periodicals Postage Paid at Renton, WA, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO Dragon Magazine, P.O. BOX 469107, ESCONDIDO, CA 92046.

AN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN A WORLD of MAGIC

Danger awaits, hardy traveler, in the turbulent lands of Arcanum! Prepare potion or pistol, for armament is a must! Encounter more than 500 friends and fiends of the oddest sort on dozens of quests and campaigns. Travel alone through this massive realm, or invite companions to join you online. And for those with discriminating taste, we sport the most advanced role-playing system ever created in this or any other reality.

Brigands beware! Eighty spells in 16 Colleges are at your disposal, while the mechanically inclined can construct wonders of the age with 56 technological degrees from eight disciplines.

An epic story with multiple paths ensures you'll never play a single or multiplayer game the same way twice. Or create your very own online campaigns with the Arcanum World Editor.

Dozens of quests and a limitless character design let you decide the destiny of your character, be it elf, half-ogre or other sundry races.

© 2000 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios and Arcanum are trademarks of Sierra On-Line, Inc. The Troika logo is a registered trademark of Troika Games, LLC.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

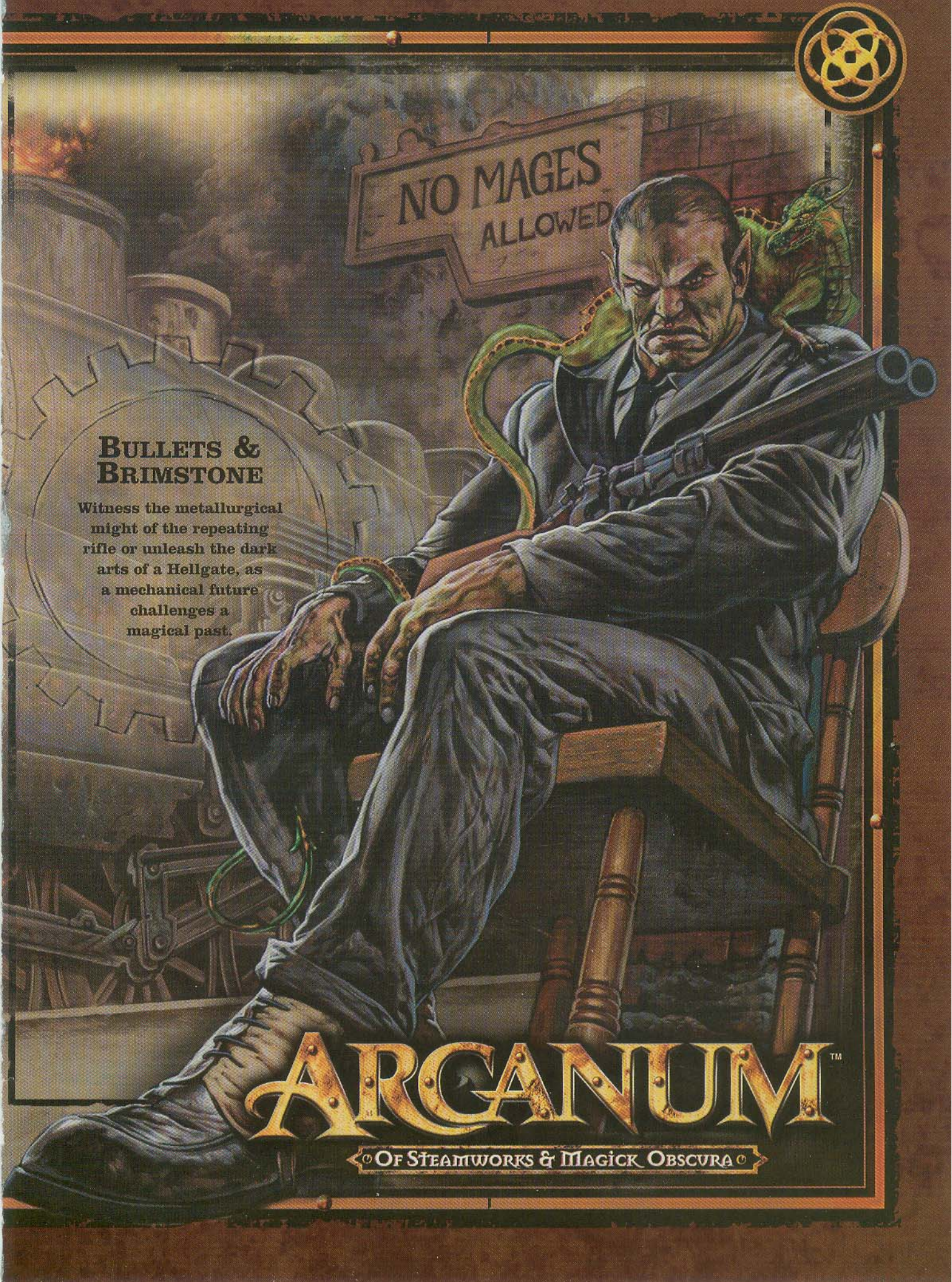
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

PC CD ROM GAME

TROIKA

SIERRA STUDIOS

www.arcanum1.com



Bullets & Brimstone

Witness the metallurgical might of the repeating rifle or unleash the dark arts of a Hellgate, as a mechanical future challenges a magical past.

ARCANUM™

Of Steamworks & Magick Obscura

REINVENTING THE DWARF

The D&D game is full of clichés for a reason. When you want the characters to meet a haughty forester, send in an elf. If you need a shifty burglar, a halfling fits the bill. For a big brick, pick a half-orc. A doughty warrior? You're talking dwarf.

Playing to type can be fun in part because it's easy. If you play a dwarf the way others expect a dwarf should act, they believe your character more quickly. Playing *exactly* against type—say, a gregarious elf or a pacifistic half-orc—isn't much better, since it's just the opposite of the cliché. That's a cliché itself. For a real challenge, invent something that has nothing to do with the clichés. Make it something original and maybe even incidental to your character's racial identity.

The new edition of the game didn't change the nonhuman races significantly (though the gnomes and halflings seem a lot better, to me). On the other hand, the very existence of a new edition gives everyone the chance to play the *first* dwarf, elf, or halfling in a new D&D campaign. Playing the first member of a race in a new campaign gives you enormous power, as we've discovered over the past year.

Chris Perkins tells about one of his old players who, not knowing much about gnomes to begin with, decided that his gnome character spoke with a pronounced lisp. Delighted by that little gimmick, Chris decided that, henceforth, *all* gnomes in his campaign lithped, no extheptions. Even in the dark, you always knew when you were talking to a gnome.

In Chris's Arveniar campaign, we've enjoyed a little reinvention as well, mostly involving dwarves and (non-lisping) gnomes. Sean plays Droo the dwarf, and Stan! plays Herumann the gnome. Between them, they've created a subtle and ever-growing mythology for their races with nothing more than the occasional throw-away line.

For instance, in one of the first sessions, one of them mentioned how much his character would love a mustard pastry. "Mmm, dwarves love them mustard pastries!" said Droo. "They'd be nice with some sprinkle wine," added Herumann. A few sessions later, a gnomish "sprinkle girl" at a fancy party offered us hors d'oeuvres. What else could they be but mustard pastries?

Another time, showing remarkable restraint under harsh questioning by the authorities, Droo responded to the insinuation that he was dissembling by responding, "I'm a dwarf. Why would I lie?" Much later, the line came back to us in the mouth of a nonplayer character. Chris was paying attention the first time, and Sean's spontaneous remark became part of what makes dwarves unique in his campaign.

Sean and Stan! are pretty clever guys, but you can't convince me that they were thinking, "What's a good trait to give dwarves in this world?" before making their fateful remarks. The magic didn't happen until another player or the DM remembered what they'd said or done and built upon it.

With that in mind, maybe all players and DMs should pay attention to what the other players say and do. If it makes you laugh, seems unusual, or just sticks with you, maybe it's worth revisiting. If it comes up yet again, maybe you have another "truth" to add to your campaign.

Dave Gross • Editor-in-Chief
dragon@wizards.com

DRAGON

Group Publisher • Johnny Wilson
Publisher • Wendy Noritake

Editor-in-Chief • Dave Gross
Associate Editor • Chris Thomasson
Assistant Editors • Eric Haddock, Matthew Sernett
Contributing Editors • Ed Greenwood, Robin D. Laws, Christopher Perkins, Mike Selinker, Skip Williams, Ray Winninger

Art Director • Peter Whitley
Graphic Designers • Travers W. Dow, Kyle Stanley Hunter

Circulation Director • Pierce Watters
Advertising Sales Director • Bob Henning
Production Director • John Dunn
Production Manager • Bobbi Maas
Circulation Assistant • Dawnelle Miesner
Advertising Intern • Alice Chung

©2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced (except for review purposes) without the prior written permission of the publisher. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., its employees, or its editorial staff, who are not liable for opinions expressed herein. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. WIZARDS OF THE COAST; TSR; DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; D&D; AD&D; FORGOTTEN REALMS; DRAGONLANCE; PLANESCAPE; RAVENLOFT; BIRTHRIGHT; MYSTARA; SPELLFIRE; GREYHAWK; DARK SUN; SPELLJAMMER; AL-QADIM; COUNCIL OF WYRMS; MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH; MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM; ALTERNITY; STAR*DRIVE; DARK•MATTER; ALIEN COMPENDIUM; FIFTH AGE; DUNGEON MASTER; PLAYER'S OPTION; DRAGON; DUNGEON; POLYHEDRON; LIVING CITY; LIVING GREYHAWK; GEN CON; RPGA are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Star Wars is a registered trademark of Lucasfilm Ltd. ©1999 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved.

*©1995, 1996, and 1998 Nintendo, Creatures, GAMEFREAK. Pokémon, Jungle, Fossil, Gym Heroes, Team Rocket, Game Boy, Gotta catch 'em all, and the official Nintendo Seal are trademarks of Nintendo.
©2000 Nintendo of America.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Contact Publishers Creative Systems at Dragon@pcspublink.com or call 1-800-395-7760. In the UK, contact kay.palmer@tnsofres.com or call +44-18-58-41-4713.

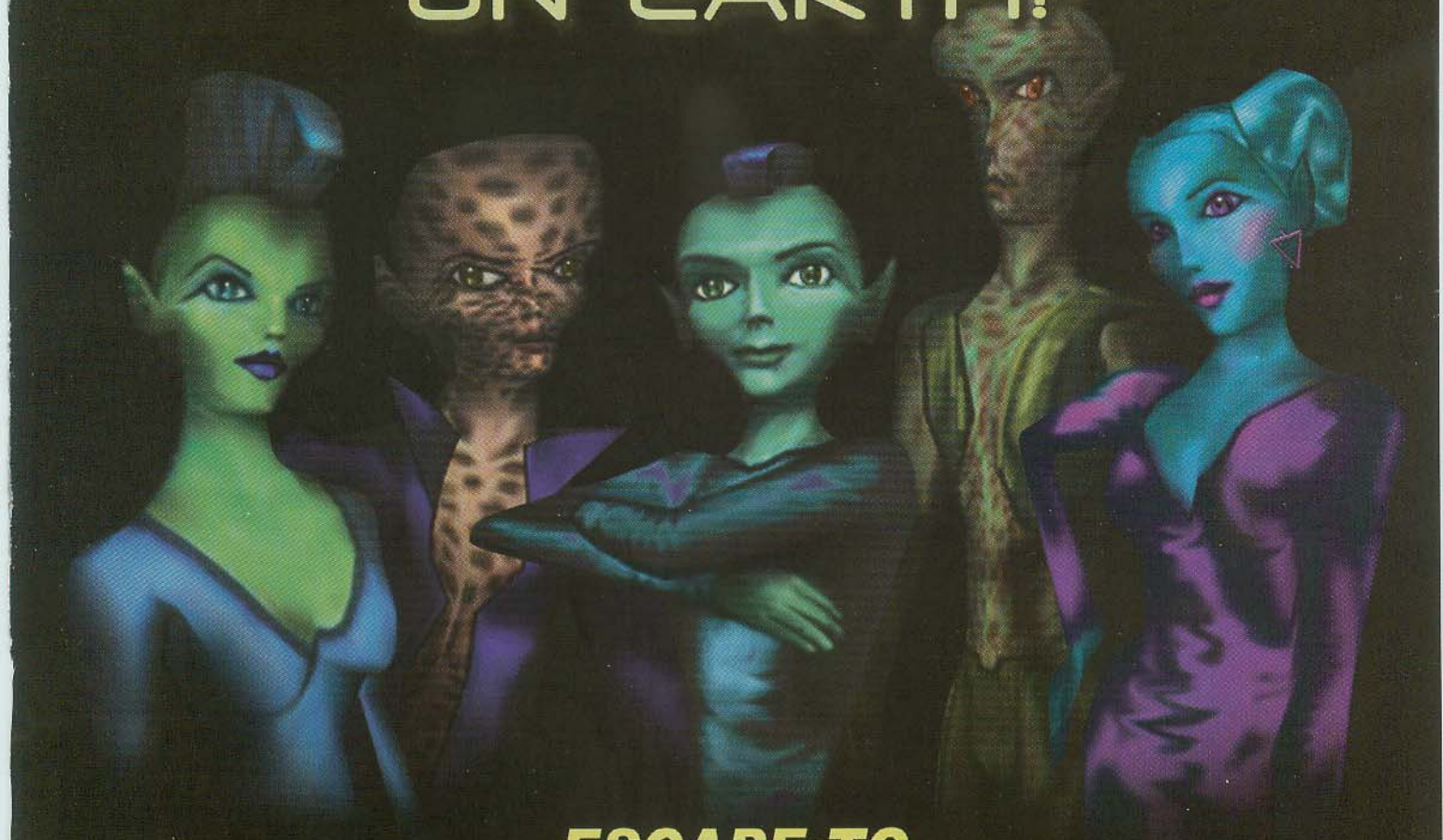
ADVERTISING: Contact *DRAGON Magazine*'s Advertising Sales Director, Bob Henning, at 425-204-7262. All ads are subject to approval by Wizards of the Coast, which reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree not to hold Wizards of the Coast liable for any loss or expense from alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements.

Northeastern Advertising Representatives: Sig or Scott Buchmayr, Buchmayr Associates, 137 Rowayton Avenue, Rowayton, CT 06853, (203) 855-8834.

Distribution Nationally and Internationally by Curtis Circulation Company, 730 River Road, New Milford, NJ 07646. Tel: 201-634-7400. Fax: 201-634-7499

Printed in the U.S.A.

FEELING ALIENATED ON EARTH?



ESCAPE TO CYBERTOWN

The Sci-fi Community of the Future

It's not hard to feel out of place on this strange planet of ours called Earth.

If you'd like to find a place where you can feel more at home, you owe it to yourself to check out Cybertown.

In Cybertown you create your own life, choose your name and how you want to look. You pick your own customizable 3D virtual reality home with chat and furniture. You can get a job, go dancing, play games and even choose a virtual pet!

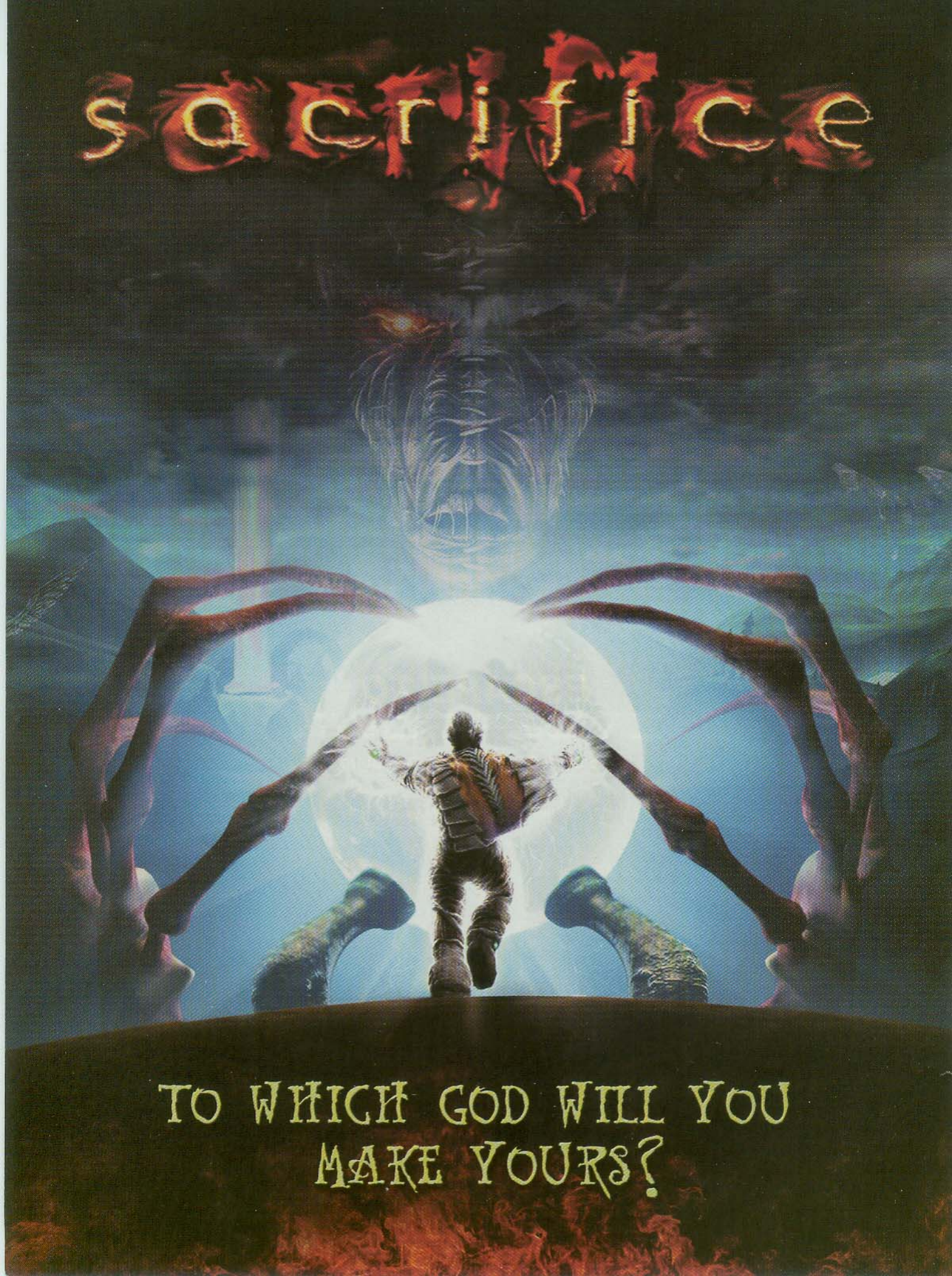
You don't just get a glimpse of the future in Cybertown, you also become part of the adventure and all for free!

JOIN NOW! Get your own life at
http://www.cybertown.com

Produced by blaxxun interactive

- FREE 3DVR HOMES - VIRTUAL JOBS / MONEY - GREAT FRIENDS - PERSONAL CHAT ROOM - CLUBS - FREE AVATARS - VOICE CHAT - GAMES -

Win great prizes in our ongoing contests!


sacrifice
TO WHICH GOD WILL YOU
MAKE YOURS?

A sacrifice to Persephone

GODDESS OF LIFE

would be good for your soul...

We are Persephone, we are the essence of life, the great healer who mends the ills of the flesh and cleanses the impurity of the soul. Our vision is one of peace, our path of mercy. We shall guide you down the true path and you shall possess power overwhelming, and our covenant with you shall be as simple and strong as it is pure.

-- Persephone, Goddess of Life

sacrifice

Declare war against other disciples in intense multiplayer action.

The souls of the fallen await redemption! Reincarnate them into *your* service!

Please the Gods...
Make your Sacrifice.

The false temples of other Gods await destruction!
Your God will be pleased, very pleased...

A sacrifice to Charnel GOD OF DEATH

offers the power of destruction and carnage.

I am Charnel, the God of Strife, Lord of Slaughter, Master of Death. Where there is pain, I am. Where there is suffering, I flourish. Without conflict, without struggle, without me to hate, who would have cause to call themselves just? Only a fool would seek contentment in peace and tranquility.

-- Charnel, God of Death

sacrifice

Your creatures need you! Cast deadly spells to aid them.

Make a Sacrifice, secure your victory, your God feeds well.

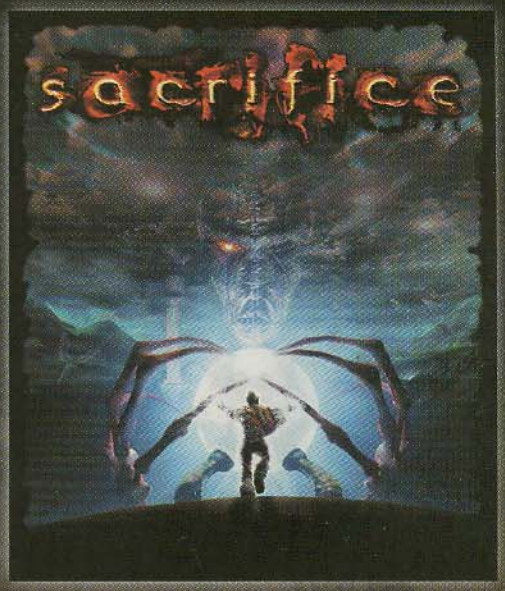
Choose a God...
Make your Sacrifice.

The dark beauty of Charnel's world awaits...

NO GREATER sacrifice

SACRIFICE

GENRE : REAL-TIME STRATEGY
DEVELOPER: SHINY ENTERTAINMENT
PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY ENTERTAINMENT CORP.
FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.INTERPLAY.COM



- Choose one of five gods and challenge up to four players over the Internet or LAN on a dynamic, ever -changing battlefield.
- Multiple paths and decisions throughout Sacrifice's single player campaign makes each time through a unique storytelling experience.
- Crush your foes using fearsome monsters and powerful magic.
- Over 50 spells and 50 creatures await your every command.
- Beauty on an unprecedented scale, over 100,000 frames of handcrafted animation.
- Colossal worlds are yours to explore.

"Best PC Game of the Show."
- ECTS 2000

COMING THIS FALL

"Sacrifice is a fantastic, visually stunning union of art and technology that sets the standard or others to follow."
-NVIDIA Corp.

"The game is drop dead gorgeous."
-Daily Radar.com

"It appears to us that Shiny's entry into the RPG/RTS area is going to be very, very impressive."
-FiringSquad.com

"Sacrifice will rip your imagination wide open and change your impression of real time strategy games."
-Tucows.com

"With its striking visuals, addictive game play, and offbeat humor, Sacrifice is definitely going to turn a few gamers' heads."
-Gameproworld.com

"Sacrifice seems to have it all: Gorgeous graphics, unique yet cohesive visual design, and the company's distinctive sense of humor."
-Next Generation

"Sacrifice is showing signs of pushing the creative boundaries for the RTS genre."
-Gamespy.com

"Interplay's best PC game, Sacrifice will be!"
-GameFan.com

"Sacrifice is shaping up to be one of the best looking games of the year."
-Voodooextreme.com

Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

SHINY ENTERTAINMENT

NVIDIA graphics

MATURE M Animated Blood and Gore Animated Violence ESRB

www.sacrifice.net

SACRIFICE©2000 Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sacrifice, Interplay, the Interplay logo and By Gamers. For Gamers. are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. Shiny and the Shiny logo are trademarks of Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All other copyrights and trademarks are property of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved.

SCALE MAIL

KEEP IN TOUCH!

To share your opinions on this issue of the magazine, post a letter to:

"Scale Mail" *DRAGON Magazine*
1801 Lind Avenue S.W.
Renton, WA 98055, USA
Send email to scalemail@wizards.com.

Include your full name and mailing address if you expect your letter to be printed, and let us know how much of that address you'd like printed. (We'll assume city and state otherwise.)

For subscription inquiries,
send email to dragon@pcspublink.com
or call 1 (800) 395-7760

Your letters about DRAGON's new look have helped Pete as he continues to refine the magazine. Even during our busiest time of year (we Buffy fans call it The Hellmonth), the designers are doing a lot to retain the elements you've told us you like while improving the ones you didn't. Please drop us a note to tell us what you think of the changes, even the minor ones.

Some of our favorite letters are those that comment on specific articles, and there was a wealth of them for issues #274 and #275. Keep 'em coming!

Recaptured Imagination

I felt the need to write to express how amazed I am at your magazine.

Years ago when I played seriously, I could not live without my *DRAGON*, but times change, game groups disband, and my old friend was forgotten.

Well there I was in the bookstore, and issue #273 stared back at me from the stands. I remembered all of the days I spent when I was a younger, reading about dragons, and treasure, and spending seemingly endless summer nights playing in all night game sessions. I thoroughly enjoyed the issue, and reading about the upcoming new edition (which I have gone out and purchased since), and the wonderful article on swashbuckling. The adventure hooks alone made the issue worthwhile. I am currently trying to get some friends together, and I hope to be running my first (new edition) game in many years very soon.

The real reason I wanted to write beside praising you for helping an ex-gamer back into the fold is this. After reading "Kidnapped" by Margaret and Ramsey Lundock, I was stunned by that piece of fiction and the excellent illustrations by Scott and Teresa Fischer. The story was warm and heartfelt, and truly worthy of your pages. I can only ask that you have them write other articles and stories for your magazine until you feel that they are ready to do a full-length novel on the adventures of Melchoir and maybe a few finned friends.

Again, thank you for re-introducing me into the world of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and letting me recapture a part of myself that I had not seen in quite awhile. I immediately sent out the subscription card and can't wait to read the next issue! Keep up the good work, all of you.

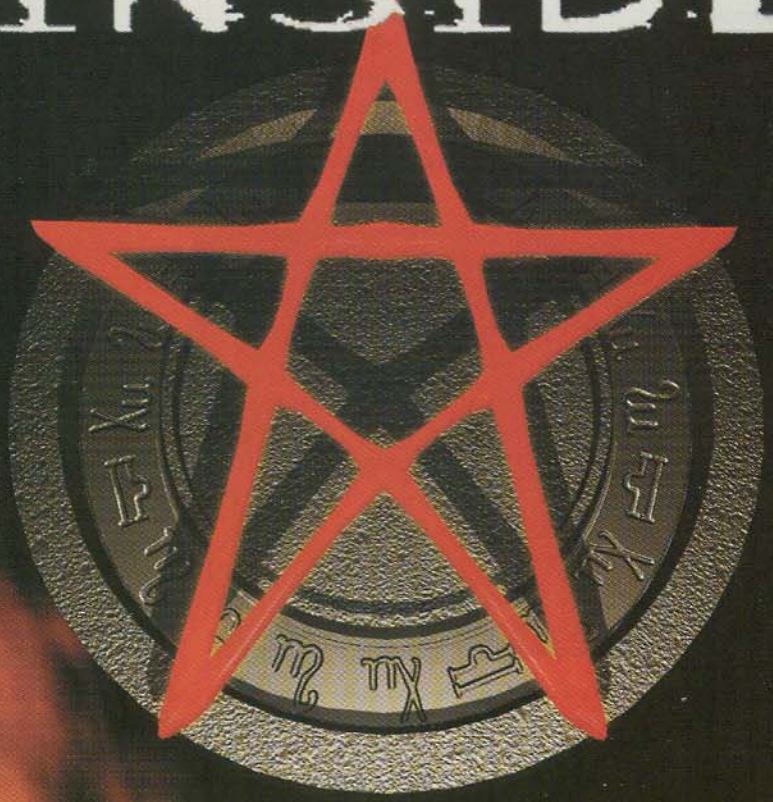
Scott Sloan • Vacaville, CA

Margaret and Ramsey are already hard at work on at least two more articles, one of them also dealing with the sea. It's too soon to tell you when they'll appear, but we're eager to see more from them soon—especially since it took them so long to break into print that first time, as Margaret gently reminded us each year at the GEN CON Game Fair.

Want the Gore Gone

I have been a subscriber of your magazine since issue #46 and just signed on for thirty-six more. I am sending my comments regarding some trends that began with the August issue.

THE DEVIL INSIDE™



EVEN IF YOU DIE...THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

HALLOWEEN 2000

RATING PENDING RP ESRB

PC CD ROM

3D ACCELERATOR REQUIRED

www.devil-inside.com

cryo INTERACTIVE

T2

Distributed By PC

© 2000 Cryo Interactive. Developed by Cryo Interactive. The Devil Inside, Cryo and the Cryo logo are trademarks of Cryo Interactive. All rights reserved. Take Two Interactive Software and the Take Two logo are trademarks of Take Two Interactive Software. All other trademarks and logos are properties of their respective owners. Windows® 95 and Windows® 98 are registered trademarks of Microsoft® Inc.

I find the new layout of the magazine very appealing and the technical quality of artwork excellent. I take exception, though, with the way the combat sections were highlighted on and within the covers of the September issue.

I acknowledge there are violent aspects at the core of roleplaying games—the forces of good cannot triumph over evil without bloodshed on the battlefield. I am more than a little disturbed, however, by the illustrations that accompany the "Unusual Suspects" and "The Right Tool..." articles. Flying gore is better left to the imagination of the readers. I remember the 1980s when the gaming industry was denigrated as a result of several tragedies involving young people who happened to participate in roleplaying games. Our magazine should not invite the criticism or censure of parents and prospective new players with this feral marketing hype.

If the quality of our magazine cannot speak for itself without shouting profanities on its covers or graphically spilling blood between them, then we have started sending the wrong message. Do not offend the sensibilities of the loyal or prospective readers for the hope of selling a few more copies at the newsstand.

I must also question whether the noble soul of a certain half-orc paladin would understand the defamation of his likeness ...

Greg Fry • Lebanon, TN

At first, we thought we'd just ignore Greg's request, but then we got a call from Tipper Gore, who warned us to watch out after the election. Since Jack Valenti has already folded, it looks like we have no choice but to enforce the PG-13 rating on the magazine. Be prepared to show your ID next issue.

More Power Plays

I think the new look for *Dragon* magazine is great. It's flashy, fun to read, and filled with great articles. The most innovative addition was in the "Sage Advice" area, where the sidebars listed a whole bunch of combos. Now that is something I like to see. It's great to get a feeling for the synergy a player's skill and feat choices can make for their character. I hope this continues.

My contributions would be:

• Barbarian Rage + Bull's Strength + Great Cleave = Total Carnage, especially if you remember to use Power Attack and transfer any superfluous attack bonus to damage bonus. It's a lot of rolling, but it is also quite likely there is nothing left standing after his turn.

• Human Mnk2 + 18 Dex + Weapon Focus (unarmed) + Weapon Finesse (unarmed) + Flurry of Blows = +8 for two attacks.

• Sor1 + *Detect Magic* + *Detect Poison* + Detect Secret Doors = Insurance in case you think your DM is dying to try out one of those new traps from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and fudges your Search rolls.

• Sor1/Rog1 + *Color Spray* + Sneak Attack = Get 'em flat-footed.

Brian M. Suyat • Tucson, AZ

We hoped this would happen, and we'd love to see even more "Power Play" ideas from everyone who's been exploring the new rules for the past four months. Even after a year's playtesting, we learn something new every week.

Indispensible? Disposable!

Robin D. Law's article "Indispensable" was a waste of space. Surely *Dragon* receives much more interesting and valuable submissions. An article devoted to kissing up to the DM is beneath your magazine's standards.

Yes, it's a bit of a blow to lose your long-standing character. I still rue the day that Darwellan Starblade was killed while battling the lich-lord Azalin of Darkon, but the adventure will continue. Any player who can't handle the loss of his or her character is a wuss and has no place in the gaming world.

Joel "Shadagar" Grineau
Saskatoon, SK

The way we hear it, Darwellan never would have died if he'd had access to feats before that battle, but we agree with you about those wusses who can't handle losing their characters. Who do they think they are to complain about the DM's having a little fun killing off their characters? That's what D&D is all about, after all.

Indispensible? Obviously!

I've never written to *Dragon* before, but after reading through #274 I felt I had to write. The new look of the magazine is great, and for the first time in a long time I actually read every single article.

There were two things that I liked best, and I thought I'd highlight them. First off was the "Indispensible" article by Robin Laws. That was something that I am planning to have all my players read the next time I see them. I feel that it perfectly highlighted some things that many DMs struggle with, like character death.

I have never killed any of my players' characters. This is not because I am soft or unwilling to let them suffer the consequences, but simply because I am not about to destroy months and months of work. We play on a weekly basis, and the amount of behind-the-scenes character development that goes on is astounding. I get histories and drawings of the characters and armor. I also get personality profiles with their fears, hopes, and dreams on them. My players give me reason to keep DMing, and I repay that by not turning round and saying that all that time and effort was wasted because their characters are dead. That, to me, is as wrong as killing them off because you woke up cranky.

The other best article was "Plot-bending." I do this out of necessity. I have a fairly keen bunch of players and for me to be able to keep the truth from them is pretty unlikely, no matter how well I try to hide the real clues or

PITCHFORKS AND CUPCAKES!

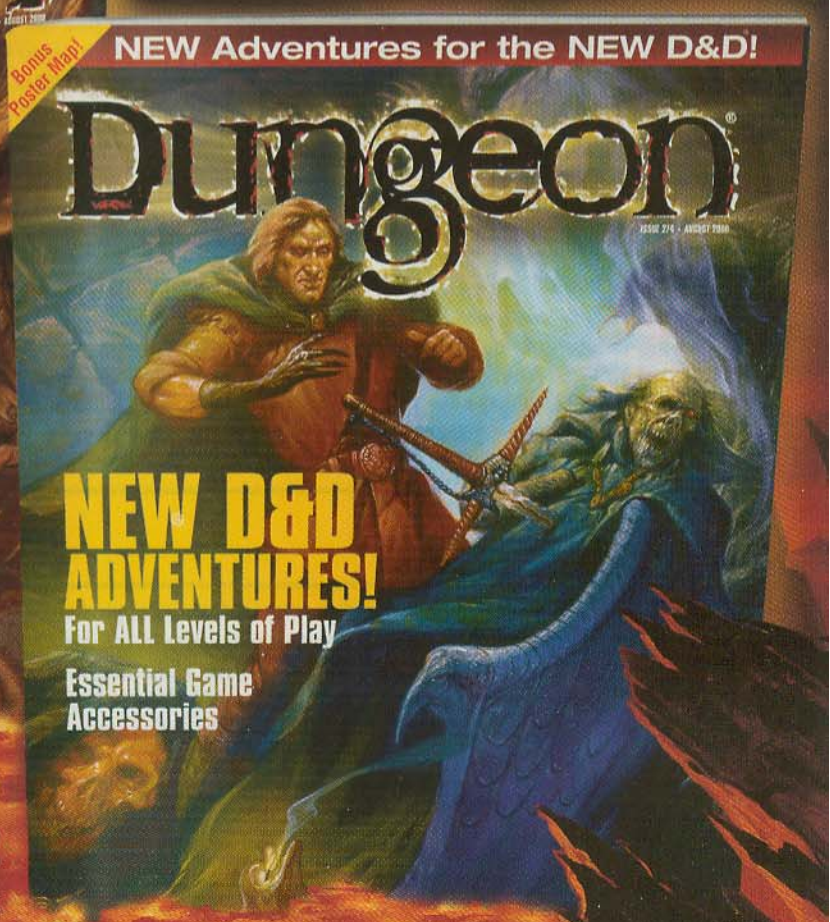
Readers are still split on the new look of *Dragon magazine*. Here are some our favorite excerpts:

Hate it!	Love it!
"Knock it off already with the goofy typeface."	"My overall opinion of the new design is quite positive."
"...the magazine seems more like an art show with text as an afterthought."	"[Pete's] editorial hit the nail on the head for how I feel exactly about the state of fantasy art."
"I have never felt so debased in my life."	"Excellent vision!!!"
"I enjoy chainmail clad warrior women and will do anything to assure their survival."	"*Dragon* has renewed the promise that there's jobs in this country for blind people." *(Oops, wrong category. -PW)*
"Please put everything back the way it was."	

Give Your Game The Edge

With the Official Dungeons & Dragons Magazines!

Dragon Magazine
Roleplaying Strategy
Dungeon Master Advice
New D&D Rules



Dungeon Magazine
Fantastic D&D Modules
Maps of Mystery
Side Treks—One-Night Adventures

1-800-395-7760 dragon@pcsbublink.com and dungeon @ pcspublink.com
order online at www.wizards.com/dragon/dungeon

Dragon, Dungeon, Dungeons & Dragons, and D&D are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast. © 2000 Wizards of the Coast

PROFILES:

JULIA MARTIN

by Michael G. Ryan

COMING CLEAN

Julia Martin wurks with werds ... er, works with words. More important, she knows how to min-max a D&D player character ... though she's not revealing all her secrets.

Since 1991, when she left Game Designers' Workshop in Normal, Illinois, to work for TSR, she's been an editor for the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, editing nearly all of the *Volo's Guides,* as well as the *Powers and Pantheons* and *Demihuman Deities* supplements. She also co-wrote the definitive volume on the FORGOTTEN REALMS deities and their churches, *Faiths & Avatars,* with Eric Boyd. "On my first day at TSR," she says, "I realized that, having cubicles for offices and no nameplates, your cube was not known as 'the cube in the middle of the downstairs maze near the bathroom' or even 'Julia's cube,' but as 'X's old cube.' My cube was identified as 'Troy Denning's old cube' for six months. Then I got moved to 'the cube that used to be the closet next to the Games Library.' Not prime territory for building one's ego."

Those days are long gone. By now, most everyone in the gaming community should know Julia's work if not her name—after all, she's the lead editor for the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game.

COMING TOGETHER

Julia joined the 3rd Edition team during the second half of the design stage when Kim Mohan, who had been the lead editor for the project, was promoted from that position to managing editor. Although the project was in midstream and editing had not yet begun, this didn't mean Julia could leisurely settle into the job. The team had to add more editors than they had originally planned for (as you can imagine, the new edition turned out to be an enormous project), and Julia needed to coordinate their efforts while keeping all of the managers well informed.

"When I first started, I thought the major pitfall would be just getting the whole thing done on time," she admits. "Also, I was worried about the inevitable communication problems that happen when you have a lot of folks working on one thing at the same time."

pop quiz!

D&D has a vocabulary all its own, and the new edition is loaded with new words. "The most telling game-specific jargon is actually in the meanings of the common-looking words," Julia says. These are words like stack, natural, and check. You know some of the easy but strange words already—polymorph or ethereal, let's say—but Julia knows some of the really weird ones. Hit the books to find out what they mean ...

blindsight	*(DUNGEON MASTER's Guide)*
masterwork	*(DUNGEON MASTER's Guide)*
bloodroot	*(DUNGEON MASTER's Guide)*
shadowmaster	*(DUNGEON MASTER's Guide)*
darkvision	*(Player's Handbook)*
tremorsense	*(DUNGEON MASTER's Guide)*
destrachan	*(Monster Manual)*
yrthak	*(Monster Manual)*

misdirect them. That article hit fairly close to home.

Anyway, I love the magazine, I think the new look suits it very well, and I have every intention of continuing to buy it.

Steven Quinlan • The Netherlands

We love the idea that DMs would have all their players read a certain article. (Of course, we want to know why those players don't already have their own copies!) We tried the same thing with our publisher, who still plays an eminently dispensable bard. If he weren't the DM's boss ...

Pass Me the Burnt Sienna

I was inspired by the "Historical Heraldry" article in issue #275. Now if you would put blank shields, partitions, ordinaries, and lines that could be colored on a CD-ROM, along with three or four of each type of beast I would buy that! I would print them on markers to show units in battle, make flags for units, crests for PCs and NPCs, mark cities on maps, and so much more.

Bryan Cooper • Riverside RI

While they won't have the charm of a coloring book, the templates Pete created for "Historical Heraldry" article are available online. They'll give you a good starting point if you want to create your own. You can check 'em out at www.wizards.com/dragon.

Dragon Mag—er—Fanzine

To date I have failed to acquire the skill "Editor," nor have I ever accomplished the feat "Published Author," so I do not pretend to be an expert on these things. However, if I was in charge of the show, I would make all the articles shorter and would base the core of *DRAGON* content around reader input. I guess I'd make *DRAGON* a fanzine.

For example, although I would devote the same four pages to "Scale Mail," I would publish at least ten letters per page.

DRAGON seems to be struggling for content. Ten pages devoted to heraldry and six to music soundtracks? If the articles had only been one page long, I would have gotten the same usefulness out of them. More frustrating is that I can get information about heraldry at the local library. Unfortunately, my library doesn't have any books on umber hulks. I depend upon *DRAGON* to provide this info for me.

Believe it or not, a magazine with my letter in it is a magazine I buy. I assume many others feel the way I do. *Dragon* #275 only had four "Scale Mail" letters and five "Forum" letters. That's not a lot of reader input. Writing a letter takes effort. If there is little chance of being published, there is less incentive to take the time to write a decent letter. However, if fifty letters are published each month, then I know I stand a reasonable chance of getting into the magazine if I take the time to commit a useful, coherent thought to paper.

Likewise, both the readers and the publishers would be served well by running open-ended contests through the whole gamut of the game for best monster, character, trap, random table, magic item, spell, and so on. Every month the winner gets published and receives a token prize, like one of next month's new product releases, a couple bucks, or some cheesy award. The readers get new imaginative idea—the reason they are buying *Dragon* in the first place—and the publisher gets inexpensive content.

Right now, the effort to contribute to *Dragon* is daunting. First one needs to request the writer's guidelines. Then one is advised to formally pitch an article idea. Finally, if the idea is tentatively approved, a lengthy article is written for submission. An eight-page article is a big project for an amateur writer. It certainly would take a lot of effort. I believe this stops many who would like to contribute, but just don't have the time, inclination, or ability to write a full article. However, many of us have been creating magic items and NPCs for years. With just a little incentive, we would take the hour or two required for a quality write-up.

This letter should indicate that I realize it's easy to get wordy, but six pages on music is not what I want. One page would have been great; same thing with Robin Hood, sheens, heraldry, and countless others. Don't get me wrong—I liked the articles, they were just too long. It's the ideas I find useful. The more ideas the better.

You know, on the other hand, if the ten-page article on heraldry had been split up over twelve months, I wouldn't be writing this letter.

Please do not misunderstand me, the ideal article length is not one page; it is a half page or quarter page. It just doesn't take that many words to say: "The right album on the stereo can add to your gaming experience."

Brett Paufler • Box 2907
Danville, CA 94526

We think it's quite easy to propose an article, as hundreds of people prove each week by sending an email proposal to dragon@wizards.com. The guidelines are easy to find, too: **http://www.wizards.com/contactinfo/TSR_Standard_Disclosure_Form.asp.**

We'd love to see shorter articles, so don't think you have to write a ten-page epic for us to consider your idea. We'd like to see most articles come in under 4,000 words, and articles of just 1,000 words could be great.

If we made a special effort to print articles by those who didn't "have the time, inclination, or ability" to write an article, we'd be doing a rotten service to the readers. Yes, it takes a little talent and effort to be published, but the result is a paycheck for the author and a good article for everyone else.

Knight-time Music

I really enjoyed your latest issue (#275). When I run my games, I do make use of some music, and I liked the article with suggestions on what to listen to.

There were a few albums that were accidentally omitted. I know that you

SUGGESTION OF THE MONTH!

4

"Power Plays" you can use

Barbarian Rage
+ Bull's Strength
+ Great Cleave
Total Carnage, especially if you remember to use Power Attack and transfer any superfluous attack bonus to damage bonus. It's a lot of rolling, but it is also quite likely there is nothing left standing after his turn.

Human Mnk2
+ 18 Dex
+ Weapon Focus (unarmed)
+ Weapon Finesse (unarmed)
+ Flurry of Blows
+8 for two attacks.

Sor1
+ *Detect Magic*
+ *Detect Poison*
+ Detect Secret Doors
Insurance in case you think your DM is dying to try out one of those new traps from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and fudges your Search rolls.

Sor1/Rog1
+ *Color Spray*
+ Sneak Attack
Get 'em flat-footed.

Inevitably, those pitfalls materialized, as Julia had expected, but the team brought it all together in time for the release date. "Everything clicked together rapidly," she says. Diving first into the *Player's Handbook,* she formatted the book to give everyone involved a sense of what the chapters would look like when published, retooled the heading structure and some of the presentation, and helped to refine the terminology to make it consistent throughout the project. She and Penny Williams then worked to create the glossary for the entire book. Oddly, "min-max" is not one of its terms.

"I have a good mind for retaining trivia and detail," Julia admits. "But the real principle here was pretty simple: Keep everything, and know how to find it." For most of the project, she kept so many paper copies of the latest version scattered around her office that they threatened to buckle her cubicle shelving; she still has all the incarnations of the electronic files, from the first draft to the final copy.

While overseeing the entire editing process, she worked on all three core books, contributing different bits to each one. In the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* for example, she fleshed out sample rules in the Technology section of the World-Building chapter and inserted the example gems and a lot of the example art objects into the treasure tables. While working on the *Monster Manual,* she encouraged Managing Editor Kim Mohan to go with an alphabetical listing of the monsters in the front rather than a standard table of contents/index combination. "It solved a space problem we had with fitting the product into its page counts," she says, "and it's really what people need for reference."

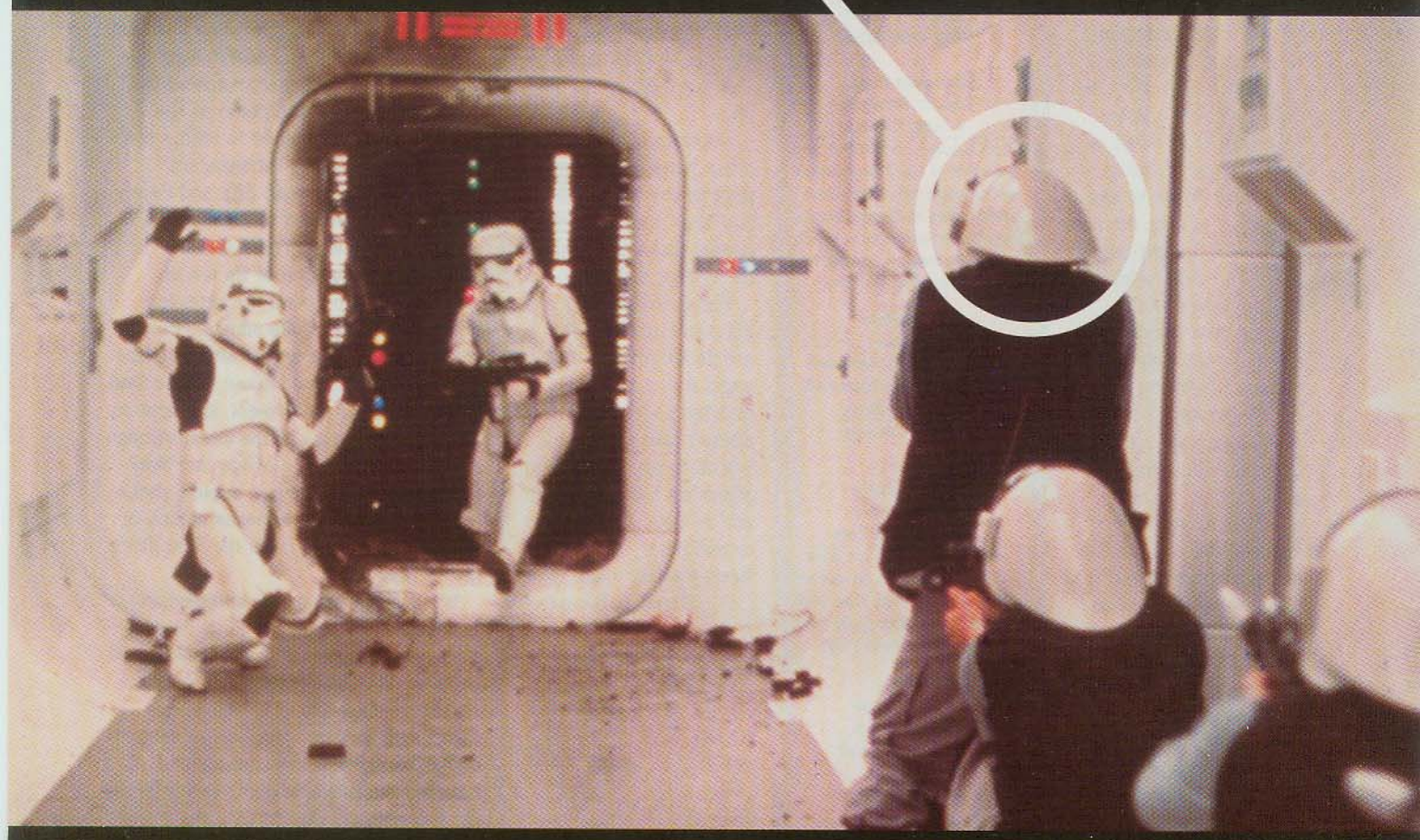
The end result, of course, is that the best roleplaying system ever created simply got better.

COMING ALONG

"Three things make the new edition a better game," Julia says. "First, it doesn't arbitrarily restrict characters. Rather, if you pick certain things for your character, you have to make a tradeoff elsewhere.

"Second, it balances classes and abilities in ways that are concrete but not guaranteed to be ignored because they take away your fun. (No more level caps for nonhuman characters.)

WHAT'S THIS GUY'S STORY?



Your life is resistance. The Empire took everything
from you but this. So be it. You will live.
You will fight. Until the Empire takes it all.

Sleek and streamlined, the new *Star Wars*® roleplaying game holds a universe of possibilities for fans of every era. The *D20 system* captures all of the action and heroism of the classic trilogy and paves the way for new adventures set in Episode I.

More depth. More skills and feats.
More Force powers. More *Star Wars*.

The Official Star Wars Web Site
www.starwars.com
Wizards of the Coast Web Site
www.wizards.com/starwars

STAR WARS®

ROLEPLAYING GAME

©2000 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All rights reserved. Used under authorization.
WIZARDS OF THE COAST is a registered trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

We didn't invent every game you'll ever want to play.

But we sell them.

Hey, there are a lot of great games out there. And you can find the widest array of games, from classic board games to cutting-edge electronic games, at Wizards of the Coast® stores—even things without our logo. So, whether you're interested in checkers, vampire clans, or something you can play on your living room TV, we've got the games you want to have fun with.

Wizards of the Coast game stores—we know games.

www.wizards.com/gamestores

All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.

GAMES WHO?

"From my years at Game Designers' Workshop, I picked up more trivia about the military and guns than a person who has neither been in the military nor has any interest in guns should know. Do you know what an APFSDSDU shell is? I do."

"And third, it uses a consistent game mechanic for resolving combat, skill use, and other game issues. Just roll a d20 and add the modifiers."

Naturally, the new edition requires players unfamiliar with the D&D system to learn a variety of new rules, but the same is true for hardened roleplaying veterans. Julia cautions players not to skip the Magic chapter in the *Player's Handbook*—it isn't just introductory text. "The material on magic, spells, and magic items and how they work is very precise in its meaning," she warns. Furthermore, she hopes players realize that some spells no longer work the way they did in the previous edition. "That can get you into a lot of trouble," she says.

"There are also very important details about interacting with objects in the Combat chapter under the Attack an Object header in the *Player's Handbook*," she goes on. "DMs should read those a couple of times."

Finally, Julia encourages all players to take time out to understand what stacking overlapping bonuses are. "This'll save you some nasty surprises later on," she says. "The glossary is probably the most underused part of the *Player's Handbook*," she says with certainty. "People think they can figure everything out from context. If you use the glossary, you can jump-start yourself through some of the tricky parts."

COMING UP

Julia is currently working on a variety of projects for the new edition that players will see on the shelves in the next eight months or so. Many of those new releases will expand the new system dramatically, though it's doubtful if any of them will give players any additional clues as to how to min-max a PC in the new edition.

"It really depends on what kind of character abilities are important to you," Julia finally confides. "If you're willing to multiclass, taking a level of monk or paladin never hurts. Monk lets you add your Wisdom bonus to your AC, and paladin lets you add your Charisma bonus to saving throws."

"Oh, and if you're equipping an NPC, *boots of striding and springing* and some *Quaal's feather tokens* are bargains for magic items, considering what a clever person can do with them ..."

That'll have to do ... for now.

So what's on the horizon? The most significant project is the new FORGOTTEN REALMS setting (due next year), which will bring Faerûn into the new edition and provide a ton of material for old and new FORGOTTEN REALMS players. Julia also recommends the forthcoming supplementary material in *Sword and Fist* and the other books like it. "That material is great for giving new options to customize your characters without unbalancing them." Finally, she speaks very highly of the upcoming psionics book. "It really makes psionics work smoothly like a cog in the system of the new D&D rather than as a clunky add-on," she says. "The work done by the design and editing team on that book is superb." D

had only so much room, but the following CDs make for very good adventuring music.

The first is a metal Band called Man-o-war. They are very good, and their *Kings Of Metal* album is excellent for adventuring, especially for knight-themed music. Their *Fighting the World* is great. They have a few more albums, but the earlier ones are hard to find.

One of my group's personal favorites is Savatage, a band that, in my opinion, really deserves exposure. All of their albums are on CD, and they have great D&D themes.

Hall of The Mountain King is a great album with a metal rendition of *Night on Bald Mountain* that just oozes tension. *Power of the Night* is another good dungeon-crawl album. Two other discs I have are the *Highlander* score and the score from the *Crow*.

Again, I would like to say I enjoyed the issue, and I look forward to the next one.

Gary Adamski • Winchester, VA

Keep those music recommendations coming. We're learning a lot, because those of us who aren't old are extra geeky—except Pete, who just thinks all your favorite bands suck.

Next month, join us for even more of your feedback in "Scale Mail" in an issue dedicated to those pointy-eared freaks known as elves. D

Nodwick
HALT! NONE BUT DWARVES MAY PASS UNDER THIS MOUNTAIN! ALL OTHERS SHALL FIND ONLY DEATH!
OH, WELL... WE THREE ARE DWARVES WITH HYPER-PITUITARY CONDITIONS. WE'RE BEREFT OF BEARDS DUE TO AN UNINTENTIONAL ELECTROLYSIS TREATMENT FROM A BLUE DRAGON.
THREE? SO WHAT AM I? A GNOME?
GNOME?! GNOME!!
HEY! LET'S ALL BEHAVE BEFORE I HAVE TO DE-NAUGHTIFY YOU!!
WOW! I THINK WE WERE ONLY INDIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR HIM GETTING KILLED THIS TIME!

EVERY IMAGE
EVERY ARTICLE
EVERY STAT
Every Dragon® Magazine – Issues 1 through 250 –
completely searchable on multiple compact discs.
Discover the Ultimate Hoard
Visit our website at www.wizards.com
All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.
DRAGON MAGAZINE ARCHIVE - 25 YEARS OF DRAGON MAGAZINE ON CD-ROM
Wizards of the Coast

Something New Chills the Heart of Icewind Dale...
A Hero reborn, a people betrayed. The Barbarian tribes are on the move, threatening to wipe out the Ten Towns of Icewind Dale. Yet all is not as it seems. An epic journey awaits the heroes of Black Isle's hit RPG, with new monsters to battle, new places to visit, new treasures to find and new wonders to behold!
www.interplay.com/icewind
BLACK ISLE studios
BioWARE INFINITY ENGINE
Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

Icewind Dale: Heart of Winter: © 2000 Interplay Entertainment Corp. All Rights Reserved. The Bioware Infinity Engine © 1998-2000 Bioware Corp. All Rights Reserved. Icewind Dale, FORGOTTEN REALMS, the FORGOTTEN REALMS logo, ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS, the AD&D logo, Wizards of the Coast and the Wizards of the Coast logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are use by Interplay under license. Black Isle Studios and the Black Isle Studios logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. The Bioware Infinity Engine and the Bioware logo are trademarks of Bioware Corp. Exclusively licensed and distributed by Interplay Entertainment Corp. All other trademarks and copyrights are property of their respective owners.

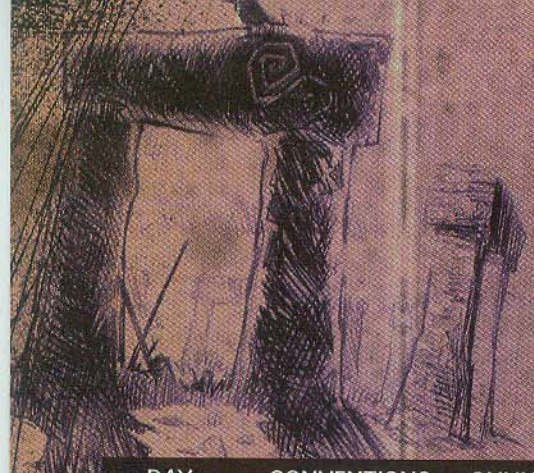
FORGOTTEN REALMS

ICEWIND DALE™

HEART OF WINTER™

Supports 800x600 resolution!

6 new regions to explore, including the town of Lonelywood.



DECEMBER
CONVENTION CALENDAR

For the most up-to-date web-event information, please visit the calendars found at **www.wizards.com/chat**

DAY		CONVENTIONS	ONLINE EVENT
1	Fr		From the Dragon's Mouth (5 P.M.)
2	Sa		
3	Su		
4	Mo		RPGA Forum (6 P.M.)
5	Tu		RPGA Tonight (5 P.M.)
6	We		LIVING CITY Time (6 P.M.) • RPGA Writer's Workshop (6 P.M.)
7	Th		
8	Fr		**D&D Movie Opens!** Designer's Guild (5 P.M.)
9	Sa		Round Robin Trivia (7 P.M.) • Totally Twisted Trivia (9 P.M.)
10	Su		
11	Mo		RPGA Forum (6 P.M.)
12	Tu		Mystery Guest! (5 P.M.)
13	We		LIVING CITY Time (6 P.M.)
14	Th		
15	Fr		RPG Hour (5 P.M.)
16	Sa		
17	Su		
18	Mo		RPGA Forum (6 P.M.)
19	Tu		Industry Edge (5 P.M.)
20	We		LIVING CITY Time (6 P.M.) • RPGA Writer's Workshop (6 P.M.)
21	Th		
22	Fr		TCG Hour (5 P.M.)
23	Sa		
24	Su		
25	Mo	WINTER FANTASY	
26	Tu	WINTER FANTASY	
27	We	WINTER FANTASY	
28	Th	WINTER FANTASY	
29	Fr		LIVING CITY Time (6 P.M.)
30	Sa		
31	Su		

All Things Dwarves
Dave Gross of *DRAGON* and Chris Perkins of *DUNGEON* deal with all aspects of the stout and stout-hearted ones this month.
December 1, 5 P.M. PST

City of Ravens
The first novel to take place in the city of Ravens Bluff, *The City of Ravens* follows a young man whose ambitions land him in the midst of a most dangerous game. Author Rich Baker and Living City Director Troy Daniels join us to discuss the crossover of fan and pro created worlds.
December 5, 5 P.M. PST

Dark•Matter: If Whispers Call
A young woman lies in a coma, inexplicably lost to this world. Meanwhile, investigators from the Hoffman Institute unravel the dark secrets of a ghost seen wandering a Chicago cemetery. Author Don Bassingthwaite joins us for the evening.
December 8, 5 P.M. PST

Get and Give Good Trivia
Round Robin Trivia doesn't just demand your knowing the answers to tough roleplaying trivia, it demands you know the questions as well. Come ready to give as good as you get!
December 9, 7 P.M. PST

Get and Give Good Trivia
Been playing D&D since you were just out of the cradle? Own every supplement TSR ever printed? Well, even if you don't, we invite you to test your knowledge in the Totally Twisted Trivia game. Prizes will be awarded! Hosted by your Wizard.Community WizOs.
December 9, 9 P.M. PST

Guess Our Guest and Win!
Every month we invite unnamed guests to speak and we give clues to their identity through their description. Email your guess; winners are chosen randomly from the entries and will receive Wizards products and have their name announced at the end of the chat! Go to www.wizards.com/mysteryguest for details.
December 12, 5 P.M. PST

HQ Time at RPGA
Every Monday, you'll find RPGA Headquarters staff in the RPGA Forum. Staff will answer questions and shoot the breeze with you (but not engage in in-character chat), so come on by!
December 4, 11, and 18 6:00 P.M. PST

Realmswarch: Realms Rules
Get the nitty gritty detail on distinctively FORGOTTEN REALMS rules—you know, the stuff that makes it special: spells and magic items, a vast pantheon, and unique characters.
December 15, 5 P.M. PST

The D&D Movie: Special Effects!
The long awaited movie is out! Now that you've seen dragons come to life on the big screen, special effects editor Joan Collins-Carrie fields "How'd you do that?" questions.
December 19, 5 P.M. PST

POKÉMON: Neo Preview
Pichu! Need more be said? Okay, well Neo will incorporate the first bunch of 100 new Pokémon to the game, as well as introducing some major new rules. Tonight the R&D team will discuss the way new rules will affect game play overall.
December 22, 5 P.M. PST

Every Wednesday, you'll find a LIVING CITY board member in the RPGA Forum ready to answer your questions about our most popular Living campaign. This is your chance to verify rumors, ask questions, and give your suggestions to the campaign board. December 6, 13, and 20 6:00 P.M. PST

Robert Wiese hosts a writer's workshop in the RPGA Events room (accessed through the RPGA Forum) for veteran and budding roleplaying scenario writers. This session is designed to help people become better adventure designers and will delve into topics involved in writing adventure scenarios; this is not a Q&A session. Designed for Guild-level RPGA members, others are welcome to listen, but we will discuss only Guild-level members' scenarios, and only Guild-level members will receive scenarios to read before the sessions.
December 7 and 20 6:00 P.M. PST

WINTER FANTASY 2001
January 25-28 IN
The Grand Wayne Center
Contact: Ft. Wayne Hilton • 1020 S. Calhoun St. • Ft. Wayne, Indiana
Email: www.wizards.com/rpga/winterfantasy
Highlights include the launch of the STAR WARS LIVING FORCE campaign (including a trilogy scenario and LARP) and RPGA's 20th anniversary birthday bash. Guild-level RPGA members admitted free when they preregister. Purchase a Guild-level membership for $20 via the web site.

CONVENTION CALENDAR POLICIES This column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here; but the following guidelines must be observed. To ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short and succinct. The information given in the listing must include the following, in this order: 1. Convention title and dates held. 2. Site and location. 3. Addressing where additional information and confirmation can be obtained. Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. **Warning:** We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Accurate information is your responsibility. Copy deadlines are the first Monday of each month, four months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the first Monday of September. Announcements for all conventions must be mailed to: "Conventions," *DRAGON* Magazine, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055, U.S.A. If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to the magazine editors at (425) 204-8206 (U.S.A.). **Important:** *DRAGON* Magazine does not publish phone numbers for conventions. Be certain that any address you send us is complete and correct. To ensure that your convention listing makes it into our files, enclose a self-addressed stamped postcard with your first convention notice; we will return the card to show that it was received. You also might send a second notice one week after mailing the first. Mail your listing as early as possible, and always keep us informed of any changes. Please do not send convention notices by fax, as this method has not proven reliable.

GIVE US A PIECE.

Check out these December events!

12/1/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
From the *Dragon*'s Mouth: All Things Dwarves
with Dave Gross and Chris Perkins

12/5/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
RPGA® Tonight
City of Ravens
with Rich Baker and Troy Daniels

12/8/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
Designers' Guild
Dark•Matter™: *If Whisper's Call*
with Don Bassingthwaite

12/12/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
Mystery Guest
Guess Our Guest and Win!
Go to www.wizards.com/mysteryguest

12/15/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
RPG Hour
Realmswatch: Realms Rules
with Skip Williams

12/9/00, 9:00 P.M. (PST)
Totally Twisted Trivia
with your Wizards.community WizO's

12/19/00, 5:00 P.M. (PST)
Industry Edge
The D&D® Movie Special Effects!
with Joan Collins-Carrie

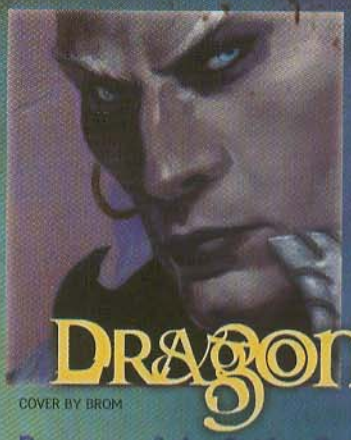
Thursdays 6:00 P.M. (PST)
Round Robin Trivia League
All are welcome!

Give us a piece of your mind. Or all of it. Say a lot. Say a little. Ask questions. Get answers. Pick the brains of people who make our games great.

Wizards.community™

Speak up: www.wizards.com/chat

*1995,1996, and 1998 Nintendo, Creatures, Gamefreak. **Pokémon** and *NeoGenesis* are trademarks of Nintendo.
THE WIZARDS OF THE COAST logo, **Dark•Matter**, D&D, and RPGA are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.



COVER BY BROM

Revenge of the Spider Queen
By Monte Cook
When someone pushes her too far, dread Lolth turns to her deadliest servants for retribution.

Leaf and Moon
By Robin D. Laws
Peer into the secret lives of elves, from birth to twilight, covering everything from courtship to the lure of darkness.

The Elven Marketplace
By Stephen Kenson
From leaf armor to starlight cloth, the elves have all the best toys.

Unusual Suspects: Druids & Monks
By James Wyatt
Don't underestimate the butt-kicking power of a halfling monk, and don't be surprised when the half-orc's dire-bear buddy eats your ranger's head. We warned you.

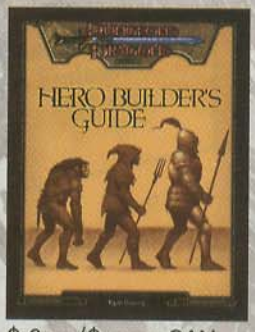
The Sleeping Tide
By J. Gregory Keyes
Fool Wolf feels the first pangs of a supernatural calling that will change his life forever. The first in a three-part novella that continues next issue.

Plus: "Countdown to the new FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting," "Dork Tower," "Sage Advice," "What's New," "Dungeoncraft," the second installment of "The Play's the Thing," and plenty more!

$4.99 U.S./$6.99 CAN
TSR Product No. 82279

Reports from the Field

***d20 Magazine*: Premiere issue to be released in May.**
The May issue of *DRAGON* will include a free copy of the new Wizards of the Coast periodical, *d20 Magazine.* The magazine will explore and support the d20 products of Wizards of the Coast, as well as those from other companies. If you have a d20 release you'd like to see covered in the magazine, send a message to **dragon@wizards.com.**



$16.95/$25.99 CAN
TSR11647
ISBN: 0-7869-1647-8

HERO BUILDER'S GUIDE
A D&D Accessory
by John D. Rateliff and Ryan Dancey
The *Hero Builder's Guide* comes packed with 96 pages of indispensable information for the creation of unique characters. Tons of tables, charts, and other tools are included to give you the widest possible range of options available in the new edition of D&D.
Pick one of hundreds of names specific to each race, personalize any race/class combination with special character backgrounds, and learn the best feats and skills to make everything from a swashbuckler to a gladiator. This is the stuff heroes are made of!

$19.95/$30.99 CAN
TSR11760
ISBN: 0-7869-1760-1

DIABLERIE
A D&D Accessory
by JD Wiker
Diablerie brings all of the flavor and excitement of the enormously popular *DIABLO II* computer game to the new edition of D&D. Over 1 million magic items, 5 character classes, and more than 100 spells and skills bring the world of *DIABLO II* to life.

$6.99/$8.99 CAN
TSR21401
ISBN: 0-7869-1401-7

THE CITY OF RAVENS
A FORGOTTEN REALMS Novel
by Richard Baker
For the first time in his perilous life, Jack Ravenwild's designs exceed his talents. His ambitions plunge him into the middle of a plot to destroy the city, a noble quest to find a lost hoard, and a conspiracy to seize the reins of power through the nobility's Game of Masks.

Ravens Bluff, site of *The City of Ravens*, is a city created by fans and members of the RPGA. This is the first novel to take place in and detail the city of Ravens Bluff.

STARS!

SUPERNOVA GENESIS™

In Space...
no one can hear
you scheme!

www.empire-us.com

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD ROM

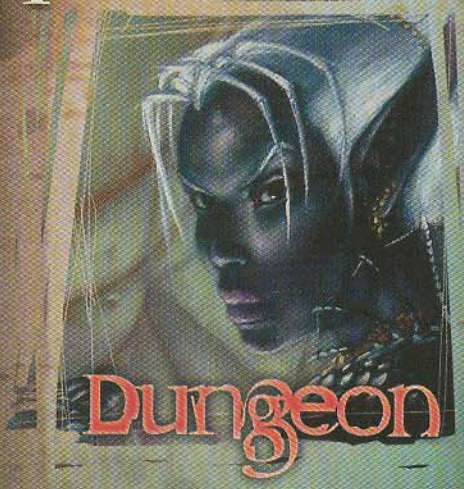
MARE CRISIUM

Distributed By PC

empire INTERACTIVE

© 2000. Stars!and Empire are trademarks of Entertainment International (UK) Limited.
All rights reserved. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners.

MORE PREVIEWS



The Harrowing
By Monte Cook
Lolth's daughter has designs on her mother's Demonweb.
A D&D adventure for 15th-level characters but adaptable for levels 10-20.

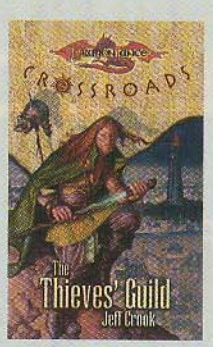
The Dying of the Light
By Chris Doyle
You have from sunrise to sunset to kill as many vampires as you can.
A D&D adventure for 9th-level characters but adaptable for levels 5-15.

Dungeon of the Fire Opal
By Jonathan Tweet
Was it destiny or something worse that destroyed the Order of the Opal Fist?
A D&D adventure for 3rd-level characters but adaptable for levels 1-5.

Armistice
By Peter Vinogradov
A sinister force threatens the peace between two duchies.
A D&D adventure for 7th-level characters but adaptable for levels 5-10.

PLUS: New Maps of Mystery!

$5.99 US/$8.99 CAN
TSR Product No. 82084



$6.99/$8.99 CAN
TSR21681
ISBN: 0-7869-1681-8

THE THIEVES' GUILD
A DRAGONLANCE Novel
by Jeff Crook

Palanthas ... City of Seven Circles, Jewel of Ansalon, heart of the old Solamnic empire. Yet at the center of this gleaming city lies a dark core: an intricate network of thieves. Though the Dark Knights ruthlessly crushed the organization, a stronger, darker guild has arisen—a guild intent on recovering its lost power.

The Thieves' Guild includes a detailed map of the city specifying the location of the Great Library and other sources of magical lore.

January

Sword and Fist	D&D Accessory	$19.95
Speaker in Dreams	D&D Adventure	$9.95
Legacy of the Drow Collector's Edition	FR Omnibus	$27.95
Dragons of a Fallen Sun	DL Novel	$7.99

FEBRUARY

Monster Compendium: Creatures of Faerûn	D&D Core Rulebook	$21.95
D&D Miniatures: Heroes	D&D Miniatures	$14.95
D&D Miniatures: Monsters	D&D Miniatures	$14.95
The Messenger	DL Novel	$6.99

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

Title of Publication: *DRAGON Magazine*
Publication Number: 0279-6848
Date of Filing: 10/01/00
Frequency of Issue: Monthly, except twice in November
Number of Issues Published Annually: 13
Annual Subscription Rate: $34.95
Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200 Renton, WA 98055
Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200 Renton, WA 98055
Publisher: Wendy Noritake, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200, Renton, WA 98055
Editor: Dave Gross, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200, Renton, WA 98055
Managing Editor: Pierce Watters, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200, Renton, WA 98055
Owner: Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Suite D200, Renton, WA 98055
Known Bondholders, Mortgages, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None.

EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION
Circulation Data from October 2000

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding Twelve Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
Total Number of Copies	57,858	63,079
Total Paid/Requested Subscriptions	14,445	15,920
Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	23,769	27,281
Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	38,214	43,201
Free Distribution Through the USPS	451	460
Free Distribution Outside the Mail	—	—
Total Free Distribution	451	460
Total Distribution	38,665	43,661
Copies not Distributed	19,193	19,418
Total	57,858	63,079
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	98.8	98.9

WHO SAID FANTASIES HAD TO BE FINAL?

"WONDERFUL VISUALS OF AN EXPANSIVE NEW ENVIRONMENT TEEMING WITH FANCIFUL MAGIC AND FASCINATING MONSTERS."

– GAMER'S REPUBLIC

A young magician is sent by his King to investigate the strange happenings on the Island of No Return. Armed with his sword and his natural talent as a sorcerer, Cain attempts to be the first person to return from the island alive. Legend has it that magical powers are at rest on this island. It is inhabited by numerous beasts, enormous dragons, and magical items that were supposed to be buried long ago. As Cain, the player must solve several baffling scenarios whilst keeping his hide intact in his search for the ultimate magic ring.

- Enhanced polygon graphics of giant dragons and enemies in a completely 3D world.
- Real time atmospheric effects include time of day and weather FX.
- Collect multiple magic rings to build an arsenal of offensive and defensive spells.
- First-person perspective in an RPG adventure where your combat skills will rely more on magic than swordplay.

Terrifying monsters inhabit the island of No Return

Gather magic rings to cast devastating spells

First-person view requires precise combat skills

ETERNAL RING™

FROMSOFTWARE™

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

agetec™

© 2000 From Software, Inc. From Software and the From Software logo are trademarks of From Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Agetec, the Agetec logo, Eternal Ring and the Eternal Ring logo, are trademarks of Agetec, Inc. PlayStation and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

countdown to the forgotten realms

The forgotten realms rules

Even if you don't play in the Forgotten Realms setting—even if you don't *intend* to play there—you won't want to miss the new rules presented with the new version of the most popular D&D world. It features four new monsters, over a dozen new subraces, more than fifty new feats, dozens of new spells and magic items, and—best of all—about four dozen new clerical domains.

If that's not enough, the new hardcover also gives you the first taste of what it means to exceed 20th level in a single class. (More rules for high level play will come in a future product.)

With all these rules expansions, the new Forgotten Realms setting is as much a rules companion as a campaign world. Here's a sneak preview of a few of those new rules.

Regional Feats

Depending on where your character grew up, she has access to new feats that other characters can't normally choose. You take a regional feat just like any other feat. It won't make you more powerful than those who don't, but it does make you more distinctly Cormyrian, Waterdhavian, or Amnish.

A character from Aglarond, for instance, can choose from the Discipline, Luck of Heroes, and Treetopper feats in addition to those available to all characters. One from Sembia, on the other hand, could pick from Education, Mercantile Background, Silver Palm, or Twin Sword.

What do all these feats do? Check out the sidebar for some tantalizing hints.

NEW FEATS

Discipline	Bonuses to Will saving throws and Concentration checks
Education	Bonuses to all Knowledge skills
Luck of Heroes	Bonuses to all saving throws
Mercantile Background	Bonuses to Appraise, Craft, and Profession
Silver Palm	Bonuses on Appraise and Bluff
Treetopper	Bonus to Climb checks, and you retain Dex bonus to AC when climbing
Twin Sword	AC bonus when fighting with two weapons

HIGH-LEVEL ADVANTAGES

The rules for playing characters over 20th level won't appear until after the Forgotten Realms campaign setting, so how could the designers present such powerful characters as the Simbul of Aglarond or Elminster of Shadowdale? They'd have to peer into the future, wouldn't they?

Well, that's what they did.

With the help of the core rules team, the Forgotten Realms designers gleaned just enough information to give the most powerful characters in Faerûn their rightful abilities. What they can have, you can have.

Instead of the usual array of advantages characters receive upon gaining a level, those who rise above 20th level can pick an Epic Level Ability (ELB). Those can range from a +1 Ability increase to a +1 Higher-Level Spell, giving a character a 10th-level (or higher) spell slot that can be especially useful for wizards who enjoy metamagic feats.

These ELBs are still under vigorous development, so that's all we dare tell you this month.

WHAT ELSE?

In the months ahead, we'll look more closely at the gods (and clerical domains) of the Forgotten Realms setting, as well as the rules for characters of levels 21 and above. Can't wait to see more? Join us again in 30 days, as we take a look at the nations of Faerûn, as well as the movers, the shakers, and the dead.

THE DWARVES OF FAERÛN

Like the elves, dwarves and gnomes come in more than one flavor in the Forgotten Realms setting. Here are some (but definitely not all) of their special abilities and ability score adjustments. As always, these rules might change slightly before the book emerges from editing.

Shield Dwarf
As *Player's Handbook* dwarf

Gold Dwarf
+2 CON, -2 DEX, +1 attack bonus against aberrations (instead of orcs and goblinoids)

Gray Dwarf*
+2 CON, -4 CHA, Darkvision 120 feet, +4 Move Silently bonus, +1 racial bonus to Listen and Spot checks, spell-like abilities

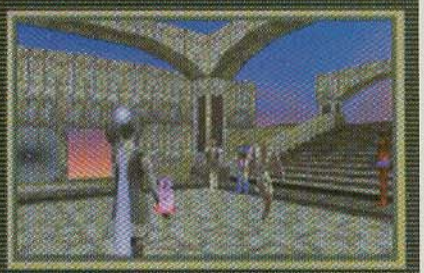
Rock Gnomes
As *Player's Handbook* gnome

Deep Gnomes*
-2 STR, +2 DEX, +2 WIS, -4 CHA, Darkvision 120 feet, spell-like abilities, stonecunning, racial bonuses to saving throws and Hide checks, spell resistance

*Gray dwarves and deep gnomes are "Powerful Races," meaning they use a slower experience table than other player characters. Guess where you can find that table.

For more information on the new Forgotten Realms campaign setting, check out the Wizards of the Coast website: http://www.wizards.com/ForgottenRealms/Welcome.asp

Underlight



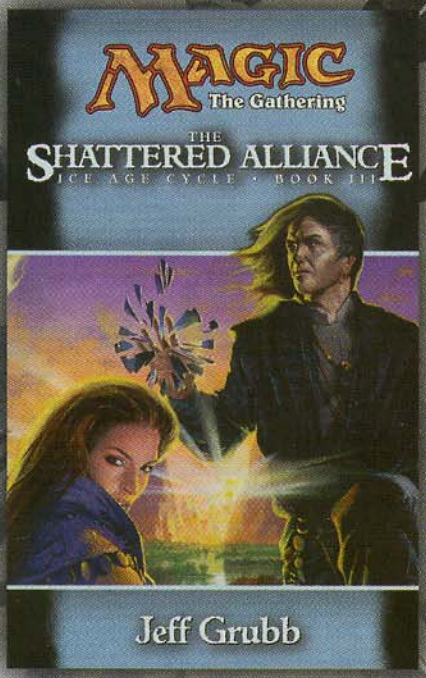
~ Massive Multi-Player Graphical Online Role-Playing Game.
~ Players Control Story And Advancement In This Truly Dynamic World.
~ Evolving Living History Based On Actual In-Game Events.
~ Immerse Yourself In A World Where The Players Are Their Characters.
~ A Shared Dream Where The Only Limit Is Your Imagination.
~ Have You Ever Wanted To Role-Play The Monster? Now You Can!
~ No Software To Buy! Download It Now... Play It Now!
~ 30 Day Free Trial With A Valid Credit Card!
~ Get 2 Additional Free Weeks Added To Your Account By Typing The Name Of This Magazine In The Referred By Field When Creating Your Account.

www.underlight.com

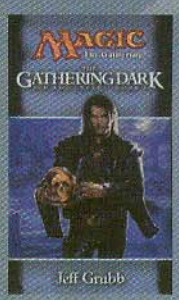
© 2000 Lyra Studios, LLC. Underlight and the Underlight logo are registered trademarks of Lyra Studios, LLC. Lyra Studios, LLC. and the Lyra Studios logo are registered trademarks of Lyra Studios, LLC. Screen shots and graphics within this publication may not be duplicated without the expressed written permission of Lyra Studios, LLC.

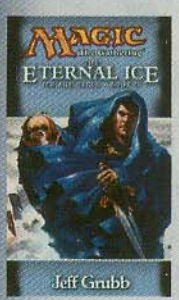
DORK TOWER
BY JOHN KOVALIC
BIG CON '2000
ORK STORM
RESS
UP THINE
OPEN GAMING
CCGS
EXIT
FOGLIO
EXIT
CARSON! WE'VE LEFT THE CONVENTION! TAKE OFF YOUR BADGE!
DO YOU WANT TO LOOK LIKE A GEEK?
©2000 Shetland Productions john@kovalic.com DORK CENTRAL: http://kovalic.com

Break the Ice



The glaciers of Dominaria are receding, and the Ice Age has come to an abrupt end. But even as the temperature rises, the world's troubles begin anew.





Also Available

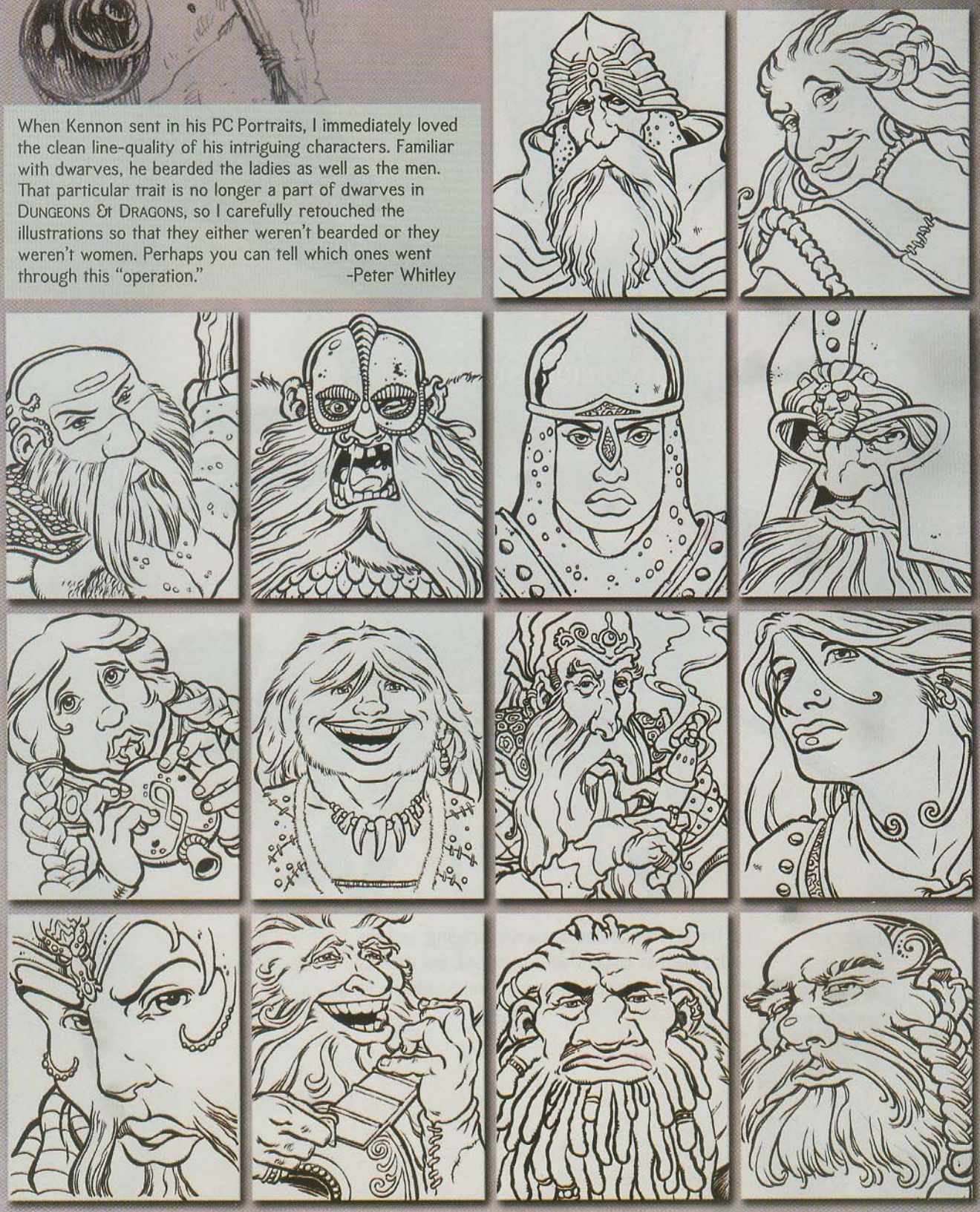
www.wizards.com/Magic

All trademarks, including all character names and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.

PC PORTRAITS

ILLUSTRATED BY KENNON JAMES

When Kennon sent in his PC Portraits, I immediately loved the clean line-quality of his intriguing characters. Familiar with dwarves, he bearded the ladies as well as the men. That particular trait is no longer a part of dwarves in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, so I carefully retouched the illustrations so that they either weren't bearded or they weren't women. Perhaps you can tell which ones went through this "operation." -Peter Whitley



An RPG as Vast as Legend Itself.

"...one of the biggest RPGs ever."
– IGN.PC

Wizards & Warriors™

Encounter over 100 NPCs, battle 75 monsters, wield weapons and cast over 100 magic spells.

Create a party of six adventurers from 15 different classes. Utilize 300 inventory items, including customizable pieces.

Embark on over 100 quests in 200 hours of gameplay, battling in real-time and turn-based combat.

RP Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

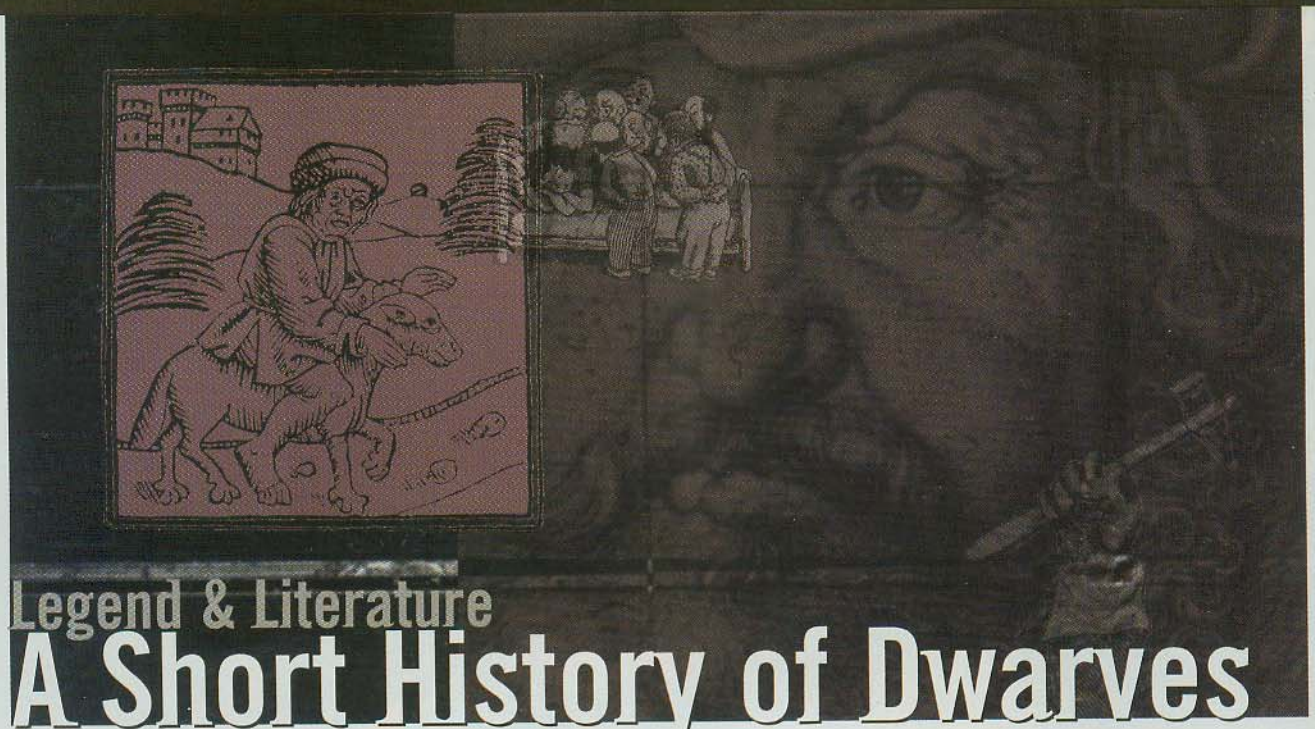
From the Creator of
WIZARDRY® V, VI, AND VII,
D.W. BRADLEY

Heuristic Park

www.activision.com

ACTIVISION.

Wizards & Warriors is a trademark of Heuristic Park, Inc. © 2000 Heuristic Park, Inc. Published and distributed by Activision. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. Wizardry is a registered trademark of 1259190 Ontario, Inc. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



Legend & Literature

A Short History of Dwarves

by Kenneth Hite

From Alberich of the Ring to Rumpelstiltskin to Thorin Oakenshield, the dwarves have a role in fantasy well out of proportion to their physical stature. However, they have almost become victims of their own recent success, burying much of their glorious past. To add inspiration, or at least understanding, to the dwarves in your fantasy game, it's worth doing a little digging in the lost mines of lore and literature.

Origins

The high Gods gathered in council.
In their hall of judgement:
Who of the dwarves
Should mould man by master craft
From Brimir's blood and Blain's limbs?

Motsognir was their mighty ruler,
Greatest of dwarves, and
Durin after him:
The dwarves did as Durin directed,
Many man forms made from the earth.

—Elder Edda
(W.H. Auden translation)

To paraphrase Voltaire, if the dwarves made mankind from the earth, we have more than returned the favor since. At the broadest possible definition, that of "strange folk smaller than us," almost every human culture has its legends of dwarves. The Greeks told tales of the diminutive but mighty Pygmies, who lived in eggshells and fought a never-ending battle against the birds of the Egyptian (or Scythian) marshes; Jonathan Swift recycled the tale of their war on Hercules for the Liliputians' ambush of Gulliver during his Travels. Possibly as an extrapolation from the behavior of small children (the only tiny humanoids most folk have seen), these "small folk" are almost always mercurial in temper and skittish around bigger beings. Their variable humors and mutability mapped easily onto other beliefs about nature spirits, which were likewise thought to be flighty and as hard to pin down as, well, the weather.

At some point, generalized beliefs became specific stories, and dwarves as we know them today become recognizable as a specific type of entity rather than generic "small supernatural beings." We can easily tell dwarves from pixies, and (with a bit more thought) from leprechauns or even gnomes. From the braided beard to the hefted hammer, we can picture "dwarf" in our mind's-eye as easily as "lion" or "willow tree." In biology, that's speciation; in folklore, it's rather murkier, but as indisputably real. However, like more conventional species, dwarves follow a detectable path of evolution. Our fantasy dwarves are just the latest of the lineage that begins underground, in the rich soil of Teutonic myth—with the worms.

Subterranean Smiths

Then the gods seated themselves on their thrones and held counsel, and remembered how dwarfs had quickened in the earth and under the soil like maggots in flesh. The dwarfs had first emerged and come to life in Ymir's flesh, and at that time were maggots. But by the decree of the gods they acquired human understanding and the appearance of men, although they lived in the earth and in rocks.

—Snorri Sturlusson, The Prose Edda

No doubt the parallel between the industrious worms in the earth and the equally-industrious dwarves therein inspired Norse skalds to imagine the dwarves were formed from the maggots in the corpse of the world-giant Ymir. From this ignoble beginning, however, the dwarves rapidly came into their own as craftsmen superior even to the gods. (Again, this is good folk logic: mines are underground, so what's more reasonable than underground people being the best miners?) Dwarves forged Odin's magic spear Gungnir, the chain Gleipnir that bound Fenris Wolf, golden hair for the goddess Sif, the magic folding ship Skidbladnir, Thor's hammer Mjolnir, and Draupnir, the Ring of Rings. The king of the dwarves, Andvari (or Alberich, as he appears in the German versions of the sagas), guards these and other great treasures in a vast underground palace studded with gems.

Despite all these good works, the dwarves were often seen as agents of dark powers; even legends that speak well of the dwarves say they have little love for humanity. Alberich, for example, only gives the various Germanic heroes magical swords or the Tarnkappe of invisibility when they catch him and force him to bargain for his life. In some versions of the *Nibelungenlied,* Alberich actually stole most of "his" treasures from the Rhine Maidens. Although their kinship with the Earth has calmed them somewhat, dwarves remain uncanny and mischievous beings much like their elven cousins. "Alberich," for example, also means "King of the Elves," and some authorities identify the Norse Svartalfar ("black elves") as dwarves. Dwarves and trolls are also often interchangeable in old Scandinavian stories; sunlight turns the dwarf Alviss to stone, a fate that befalls many trolls in fantasy legend.

Defining the Dwarf

We dwarfs need but little food; however, it gets burned fast when we use those thick logs. We don't devour such large portions as you coarse and greedy people. I had just driven in the wedge safely, and everything would have gone all right, but the cursed wedge was too smooth, and it sprang out unexpectedly. The tree snapped shut so rapidly that I couldn't save my beautiful white beard. Now it's stuck there, and I can't get away!

—The Wicked Dwarf, in "Snow White and Rose Red," from Grimm's Fairy Tales

By medieval times, the dwarves had a specific niche in stories, and a specific description to fit it. They were short, wizened, and bearded; they aged rapidly (becoming a full adult in seven years) and then stayed old for centuries. (Dwarves thus added the stereotypical crotchetiness of age to the emotional swings of childhood.) Their feet were often depicted as webbed, emphasizing their inhuman nature; dwarves with names like "Goose-Foot" or "Flat-Foot" appear in many stories. Dwarves are surly, often greedy, and tricksome, but (sometimes) capable of random kindnesses. A dwarf will kidnap children or steal food, but in exchange for help or a gift he often leaves gold or helps tell the future. These more domesticated "household" dwarves closely resemble the "brownies" of English folklore, and on the Baltic island of Rügen, such dwarves are known as Brown Dwarves. Rügen's White Dwarves, meanwhile, closely resemble pixies with their love of dancing and winged shapes; Black Dwarves are, as you might expect, malicious and cruel.

This split, between "kindly" and "cruel" dwarves, appears throughout German and Scandinavian folklore. Although wicked dwarves such as Rumpelstiltskin are most common, there are some dwarves who befriend or aid the hero (or heroine, as with Snow White's seven protectors). Sometimes the same dwarf can be both benefactor and trickster, as with the dwarf Giaouf, who plays "pied piper" to the town of Ispahan. Wandering heroes of medieval romance ran across such enigmatic dwarves, especially in the German minnesinger tales like Heinrich von Veldig's 12th-century tales of the adventures of

What About Duergar and Derro?

These vile subspecies of dwarves have more in common than underground warrens and bad attitudes; they're both examples of how liberties with language and fiction can add something new to your games.

"Duergar" is simply the plural of the Danish "duerg," meaning "dwarf." The Danish word is likely cognate with the Anglo-Saxon "dweorg," which became "dwergh" in Old English, then "dwerf" and eventually "dwarf" to us. The Danish brought their legends of malevolent dwarves with them to Northumberland, the section of England they conquered in the 9th century A.D. Since their stories differed from conventional English fairy tales in depicting the dwarves as uniformly evil and deceitful, the Danish spelling was retained to connote these specifically Northumbrian "black dwarves." Much as their *Monster Manual* description states, they wore stone-colored clothes to blend into the rocks and were masters of illusion and invisibility.

The "derro," meanwhile, enjoy slave-raiding and torture. They resemble nothing so much as the Dero, the "detrimental robots" imagined by Richard Shaver (1910-1975) for a series of science-fantasy stories in Ray Palmer's *Amazing Stories* magazine in the late 1940s, beginning with "I Remember Lemuria!" (1945). Shaver's Dero were stunted, deformed creatures who followed cruel religions of pain and mockery, masters of vile machines in caverns deep under the earth. Although Richard Shaver was quite probably severely mentally ill (his Dero stories were originally presented as fact in his letters to Palmer), the nature of the Dero clearly stems from the Morlocks in H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, (1895) and literally refers back to Arthur Machen's devolved subhuman race beneath the earth that were featured in such stories as "The Shining Pyramid" (1895) and "The White People" (1904). Machen, of course, drew his notions from Victorian anthropologists theorizing about the origins of fairy lore—including those tales of the wicked, child-stealing duergar.

Recommended Reading

In addition to the sagas and fiction mentioned in this article, you might try mining the following books for nuggets of dwarven (and more general "subterranean, supernatural little people") history and legendry:

Briggs, Katharine, *An Encyclopedia of Fairies* (Pantheon, 1976).

Carter, Lin, *Imaginary Worlds* (Ballantine, 1973).

Ellis Davidson, H.R., *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (Penguin, 1964).

Kafton-Minkel, Walter, *Subterranean Worlds* (Loompanics, 1989).

Keightley, Thomas, *The Fairy Mythology* (G. Bell, 1878).

Silver, Carole G., *Strange and Secret Peoples: Fairies and Victorian Consciousness* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1999).

South, Malcolm, ed., *Mythical and Fabulous Creatures: A Sourcebook and Research Guide* (Peter Bedrick, 1988).

Zipes, Jack, trans., *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm* (Bantam, 1992).

Duke Ernest in the Holy Land. Dwarves, symbolizing mystery and fate, became standard features of exotic tales of faraway lands, just as the Pygmies had been for the Greeks.

As farmers cut back the primeval forests, and homebound story-tellers gradually became less nervous of the wild spaces, their local dwarves became more domestic. In Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (1485), dwarves appear almost ubiquitously as retainers, castle guards, or majordomos. Specific dwarves, such as Gareth's dwarven squire or the dwarf who gives Lancelot a ride in his cart, even play major roles outside the traditional ones of antagonist, obstacle, or treasure-granter. Sir Tom Thumb, who valiantly served King Arthur in later folk ballads, was a very small human, much like the Liliputians, although he was a great favorite of the fairies and dwarves, and many of his adventures dealt with these now charmingly tame folk.

The Wicked Strike Back

For some reason his fellow [dwarfs], who at home did nothing more objectionable than mine a bit of iron ore and hunt small creatures, felt impelled, once in the big city, to wear chain mail underwear, go around with axes in their belts, and call themselves names like Timkin Rumbleguts.

—Terry Pratchett, ***Wyrd Sisters***

The dark dwarves didn't go away. Enough of the old, cruel dwarven legends remained that not only the brothers Grimm but other folklorists such as Johann Karl Musäus (1735-1787) could assemble numerous examples in their pioneering collections of märchen (the traditional supernatural stories known, inaccurately, as "fairy tales" to English-speakers). All across Europe, scholars were beginning the process of classifying and interrelating such stories, pronouncing with fine Enlightenment precision on the difference between Cornish knockers and German kobolds (both of whom would have been easily recognized as dwarves by the early Norse), and setting the stage for multiple volumes of monster compendia for roleplaying games yet unwritten.

In this supremely rational world, dwarves symbolized the imperfect and supernatural, and hence, evil. The Comtesse d'Aulnoy (1650?-1705) used such symbolism consciously, as a literary effort, rather than as a scholarly one. In "The Yellow Dwarf" (1682), the Comtesse d'Aulnoy tells of a princess, All-Fair, betrothed unwillingly to a hideous dwarf after he saves her from two lions. She marries the King of the Gold Mines, but the dwarf kidnaps her and confines her in a Steel Castle; although the King manages to win to her side with the aid of a diamond sword, the dwarf treacherously stabs him with it. All-Fair, of course, then expires of a broken heart.

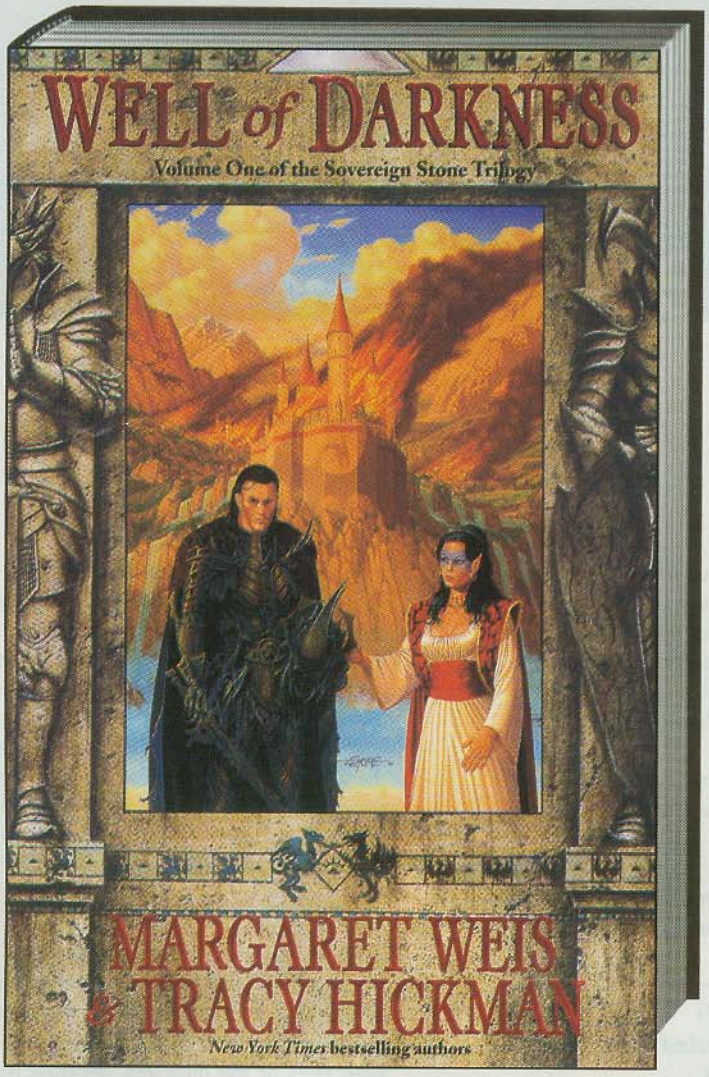
When the Romantic writers exalted dark and uncanny elements of their tales by way of rebellion against rationalist conformity, evil (or ill-omened) dwarves became standard features of their work as well. The prevalence of dwarves in Germanic legendry also aided the nationalistic agenda of poets like Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), who recast German folklore as tales of supernatural fantasy. British writers borrowed wholesale from the Germans, translating their märchen for the ever-larger reading public, and then began to mine their own country's stock of lore. Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) took the Border country legends of the duergar (see sidebar) as the basis for his novel *The Black Dwarf* (1816). Malicious, or at least troublesome, dwarves remained the standard through the great Victorian explosion of fairy stories. Despite its title, George MacDonald's children's novel *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) clearly indicates the state of the dwarf in Victorian art; his "goblins" are comical, malicious, ugly, stunted mine-workers with tender feet (shades of the old goose-footed dwarves).

The Victorians, like the late medievals, domesticated their fairies rapidly. By the turn of the century, dwarves had become comic bunglers, jolly miners, or occasionally helpful allies. J.R.R. Tolkien took this material and recast it in light of the original Scandinavian dwarf-lore to create the rollicking and mischievous, but also sturdily competent, warlike, and dependable dwarves of *The Hobbit* (1937). Over the last six decades, thanks to Tolkien's immense influence, his dwarves have become a nigh-omnipresent feature of fantasy literature.

DWARVES HAD BECOME COMIC BUNGLERS, JOLLY MINERS, OR OCCASIONALLY HELPFUL ALLIES.

For now, fantasy authors seem content to mine this cavern of genre rather than explore any potential variations on the dwarven heritage of saga and story. So if you want to add something new to the dwarves in your game (or even something old, as Tolkien did), you have to do the work yourself. Heigh-ho.

Enter Loerem . . . and Beware.


WELL of DARKNESS
Volume One of the Sovereign Stone Trilogy
MARGARET WEIS
& TRACY HICKMAN
New York Times bestselling authors

Book One of Weis & Hickman's Dazzling New Fantasy Epic

Well of Darkness

Book One of the Sovereign Stone trilogy

A WORLD OF WONDROUS BEAUTY AND MERCILESS DECEIT, *here humans, elves, dwarves, and orken co-exist in a fragile balance of power and self-interest—an equilibrium maintained by the* Dominion Lords, *peace-loving warriors forged from the magic of the Sovereign Stone. Yet there is an all-but-forgotten evil slumbering at the heart of* Loerem . . . *and at the sacred Stone's core.*

0-06-105180-2 · $25.00/$37.95 Can.
Available Wherever Books Are Sold

Eos
An Imprint of HarperCollins*Publishers*
www.eosbooks.com

A Dwarven Lexicon

by Sean K Reynolds

Anastrianna Sainnodel frowned at the group of dwarves, their faces still sweaty from the battle against the orc bandits. Her group had been set upon quickly, aided by a half-orc cleric of their foul god, Gruumsh. They managed to slay almost every one of her bodyguards before the dwarves arrived. Of her party, only she and her cousin were alive.

"Thalior," she said, gesturing toward the dwarves, "thank them for their aid, and ask if we can repay them somehow."

"You understand, cousin, that I know little of their language. Your father the king commanded me to study the arcane arts rather than the tongues of lesser races."

"I ask only that you try, my cousin."

"I shall." Taking a moment to compose himself, he turned to the dwarves. "Honest dwarves, we are ... grateful ... for your bravery against the orcs. How may we repay you?"

var dwur = lar gul bak nar ged ork // lar kaglem aur X

(honest dwarf, we good you battle ork. we pay gold?)

"What in the name of the Nine Hells is he saying?" asked Rurik, the youngest of the dwarven troupe, in his native language.

"I think he's trying to bribe us to go away," suggested Velgost, hardly the most clever of the bunch.

"He's at least trying," murmured Ulgroth, the leader of the mercenaries. "I think he's offering us a reward or payment."

"Sounds good!" whispered Rurik. "I could use some more money."

"You speak with Abbathor's mouth, young one. Mind your tongue. The count is paying us well enough to patrol this pass. I'm going to hurry these elves along their way." Turning to the elves, he spoke slowly and clearly, using simple words he thought the elf-boy would understand.

"Elf friend, you go. Danger! Human king pay dwarves fight evil. You no pay dwarves. You travel city good."

olv mer = bak gos // gend° // hurm dornar kaglem aur dwur ged der // bak mos kaglem aur dwur // bak hergos drukafaren gul

Thalior sighed in relief. "They do not seek a reward, cousin. The local human king pays them to patrol here. They say that this is a dangerous place, and we should make our way to the city, where we will be safe."

"Excellent. Let us be on our way."

"As you wish, ambassador."

Dwarven myths say that Moradin the Soul-Forger, head of the dwarf pantheon, created the first dwarves, forging them from metals and gems in the fires that lie at the heart of the world, breathing life—the dwarven soul—into their forms when he blew on them to cool them. It is no wonder that such an enduring race would create a language and script that would persist almost intact for thousands of years and be adapted by a wide variety of creatures.

Many non-dwarven races also use the Dwarven alphabet, even if they use different pronunciations and meanings for the characters. The gnomes, long-time allies of the dwarves, adopted the Dwarven script ages ago to facilitate communication in trade and their shared war against goblinoids. Bugbears, goblins, hobgoblins, and orcs rarely use written words, but those that do use Dwarven runes, as they are too lazy to develop their own and recognize the value of a widespread language. Most intriguing is the fact that Terran, the language of xorn and other earth-based creatures, uses the Dwarven alphabet. This might be a result of parallel evolution (for the elemental creatures would face the same problems as the dwarves working in stone) or evidence that dwarves were originally created from stone. The language could be the result

of a subtle but inherent property of the earth element when it is the primary building block of such creatures. In any case, the similarities in the script make it a simple matter for dwarves to learn the other languages that use it.

While the Dwarven script has been adopted by other races, the Dwarven language itself has remained mostly unchanged. The long dwarven lifespan and adherence to tradition has prevented the slow creep of definitions, alterations to characters, and changes in dialect that plague languages used by shorter-lived or more chaotic races. The exceptions are the derro and the duergar, who altered their language intentionally over time to protect their secrets from the surface dwarves. They have adopted words and pronunciations from Undercommon, a language that shows a strong influence from the elven tongue. While Dwarven has incorporated some foreign words and created new ones as their knowledge progressed, its roots remained the same, and ancient writings in Dwarven are just as understandable to the modern reader as those written a thousand years ago.

ALPHABET & PUNCTUATION

The dwarves learned to work stone and metal early in their history, and the Dwarven alphabet reflects this. Its characters are composed mainly of straight lines; curved ones are present in a few characters that represent sounds that are difficult for dwarves to pronounce or that were adapted from other languages. Similarly, punctuation marks are rare; sentences are separated by diagonal slashes (//). Solitary statements do not have such slashes at the end. Pauses in a sentence (such as where a comma would be in Common) are represented by a pair of parallel horizontal lines (=). Proper nouns are identified by a horizontal line below the first character of the word. Questions are indicated by an X, representing a choice of paths. A sentence with strong emphasis (normally given an exclamation point in Common) is followed by a circle (°), the importance of the statement expressed in the difficulty of carving a circle in stone (as compared to a straight line).

AN ADVENTURER'S GUIDE TO PIDGIN DWARVEN

Dwarven	Common	Part of Speech
–	or	conj
abat	behind	prep
aglot	yet	prep
alf	air	n-element
ang	silver	n-wealth
angdor	mithral	adj
argul	chest	n
aun	water	n-food
aur	gold	n-wealth
auraun	ale	n-food
aurdrukar	inn	n-place
azan	night	adj
bak	you	adj
bar	red	adj-color
bel	above	prep
braut	demon	n-creature
darsam	celestial	n-creature
deg	mustard/spice	n-food
dek	strong	adj
der	evil	adj
dews	on	prep
dog	near	adj
dogos	beside	prep
dor	iron	adj
dormark	anvil	n
dornar	king	adj
drukafaren	city	n-place
drukar	home	n-place
dug	smart	adj
dur	shield	n-weapon
durgarn	dragon	n-creature
dwar	dwarf	n-creature
dwarkar	clan	adj
ews	hammer	n-weapon
far	big	adj
farl	rope	n
farrenglos	year	n-time
flos	scroll	n
frul	leather	adj
frulbraut	horse	n-creature
frus	animal	n-creature
ged	battle	n
gelm	peace	n
gend	danger	n
glos	day	n-time
glot	after	prep
gnur	gnome	n-creature
gos	go	v
gost	meat	n-food
gren	poison	adj
grim	beard	n
grum	steel	adj
grumdek	adamantine	adj
gul	good	adj
gullend	luck	n
gulm	heal	v
gund	caller/call	adj
gurn	green	adj-color
gurnvos	tree	n
gurnvosen	forest	n-place
heng	halfling	n-creature
her	to	prep
hergos	travel	v
hermot	through	prep
horlem	take	v
horm	cleric	adj
hren	rain	n
hrot	few	n-number
hrun	one	n-number
hrunnar	name	n
hurm	human	n-creature
hurmfar	giant	n-creature
jor	many	n-number
kagel	for	prep
kaglem	give	v
kanazan	darkvision	n
kar	far	adj
karakan	scout	n
karglos	tomorrow	n-time
kel	below	prep
khun	glitter/bright	adj
klar	bread	n-food
klos	food	n-food
kos	ugly	adj
kurm	bag	n
kurn	enemy	adj
kurnzarn	war	n
kurs	in	prep
lar	we	adj
lu	earth	n-element
mag	black	adj-color
magmornder	undead	n-creature
mal	true	adj
mar	mountain	n-place
marn	stop	v
marnak	rune	n
marnarn	magic	n
marrur	clothing	n
mer	friend	adj
mord	under	prep
morn	die	v
mornludrukar	tomb	n-place
mos	no	adv
mosk	but	conj
mulg	stupid	adj
murg	yes	adv
nae	stone	n
naeborn	cave	n-place
nar	bravery	adj
ney	white	adj-color
nos	with	adj
nur	gem	n-wealth
nus	sword	n-weapon
nyr	axe	n-weapon
og	armor	n
olv	elf	n-creature
ork	orc	n-creature
rem	speak	v
remarn	song	n
ros	weapon	n-weapon
rosh	spear	n-weapon
tang	bow	n-weapon
tanthanus	arrow	n-weapon
tel	fire	n-element
telormar	forge	n
than	small	adj
thanamorn	rest	v
thannergos	dance	n
then	beautiful	adj
thos	thief	adj
thost	greed	adj
toglot	before	prep
tor	soul	n
torfarn	deity	n-creature
valdar	cowardice	adj
valergos	flee	v
valkag	bribe	v
var	loyal	adj
vas	so	prep
vel	and	conj
velmos	nor	prep
vol	blue	adj-color
vos	wood	n
yar	yellow	adj-color

Traditionally, carried messages in Dwarven are inscribed on diamond-shaped flat tiles of stone or metal, with the writing starting at one of the corners and spiraling inward, often with a picture or rune at the center identifying the recipient. Even though dwarves learned to paint on surfaces in the manner of other races, they still retain their traditional layout for all but the shortest and most informal writings.

BASIC GRAMMAR

The Dwarven language consists mainly of low vowels and hard consonants, and when spoken it tends to drone a bit. Given the importance of names in their culture, nouns are usually listed first, with a string of adjectives trailing after (for a minute or more in the case of historical objects or important people). Quite frequently, smaller words are combined into larger ones, even if one of the words is a name. In cases where combining words in this way might be confusing or excessively long, they are broken into smaller compound words. For example,

"Tordek, brave in war, loyal friend, with the adamantine greataxe Horkulmor" would translate as:

tordekkurnzarnnarmervar = nos horkulmorfarnyrgrumdek

Around children, the hard of hearing, and non-dwarves, it would be customary to emphasize the statement with specific breaks, like this:

tordek kurnzarnnar mervar nos horkulmor farnyrgrumdek

IT IS NO WONDER THAT SUCH AN ENDURING RACE WOULD CREATE A LANGUAGE THAT WOULD PERSIST FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

The subject of a sentence is followed in formal speech and writing by the word "a," which doesn't have a true translation and exists only to point out the subject. "A" is usually pronounced "ah" as in "father," but dialects do form in remote clans where it is pronounced as the "a" in "map." Informal speech, particularly with non-dwarves, often omits the "a," particularly when the speaker is in a hurry. In written form, the "a" is always separated from the words forming the subject. When the subject is omitted from a sentence (such as "Come here") in informal use, the "a" is omitted; formal usage requires a subject.

When secondary words are attached to a primary word, they are attached after the primary word in any order significant to the speaker, although there is a predisposition toward an arrangement that is easier to pronounce. In written form, most authors structure their compound words so they are visually appealing, with pronounceability a secondary (but still important) concern.

A curious omission in Dwarven is a word for "or." Rather than separating comparative statements, they repeat the similar elements in two sentences, so "Do you want to attack the orc or the bugbear?" becomes "Do you want to attack the orc, attack the bugbear?"

SAMPLE PHRASES

Note that since the list of vocabulary words is limited, some substitutions for similar words have been made. In effect, this is Pidgin Dwarven. Dwarven punctuation is included, although it is apparent that many of these sentences are verbal exchanges.

Mialee, talk to the ugly elf.
mialee = a rem olvkos

The elf says the magic sword we want is in the lich's tomb.
olvrem a marnarnnus lar horlem magmornder mornludrukar

He'll take us to the mountain of the tomb if we pay him.
valkag olv a horlem mornludrukarmar

The cave is evil and dangerous. We should go.
naeborn a jorgendder // largos

Shut up, you stupid coward! Get in there!
mosrem = bakmulgvaldar a° // gos naeborn°

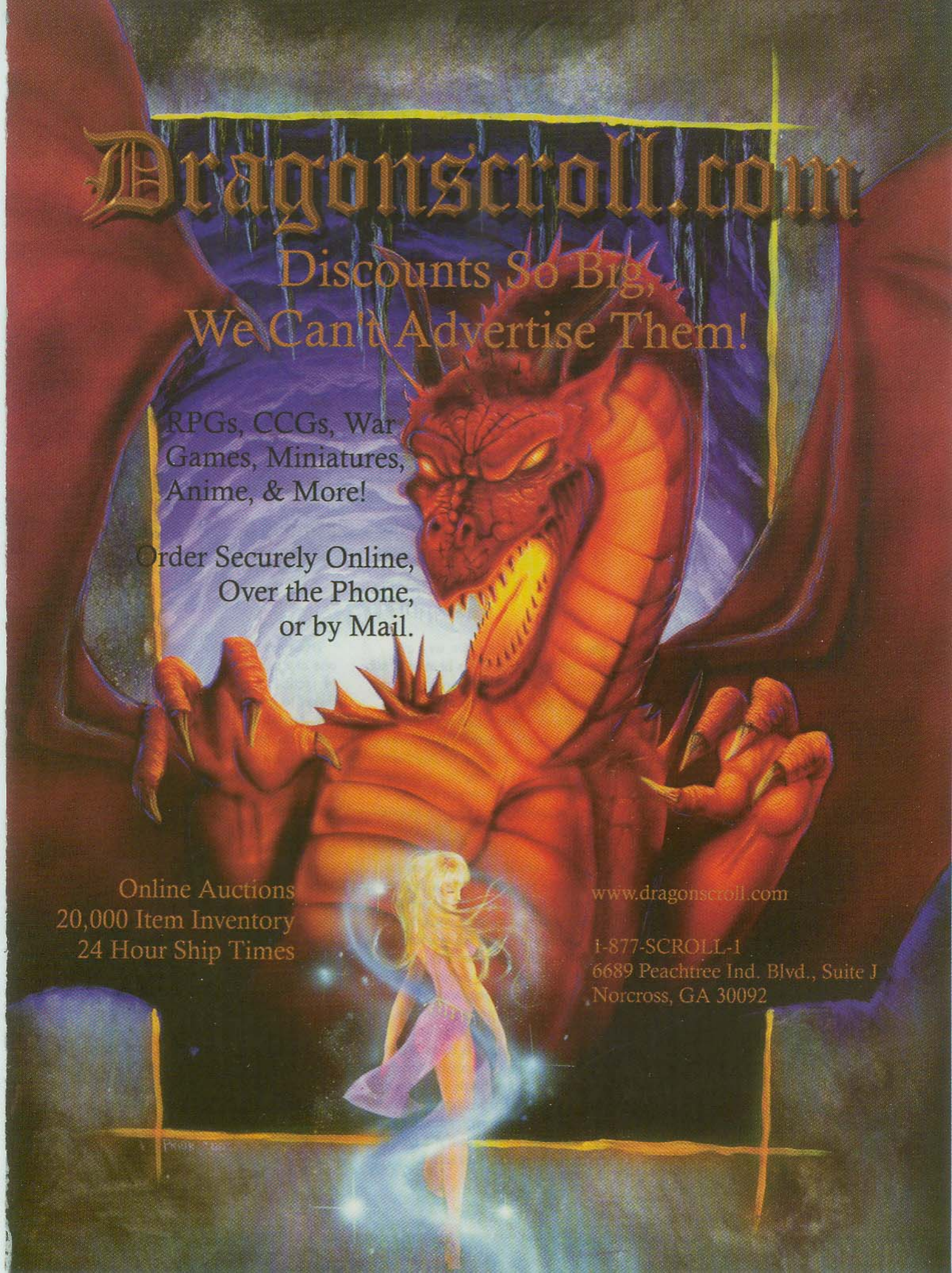
Tordek, hit the orc with your axe
tordek a = gedork nosnyr

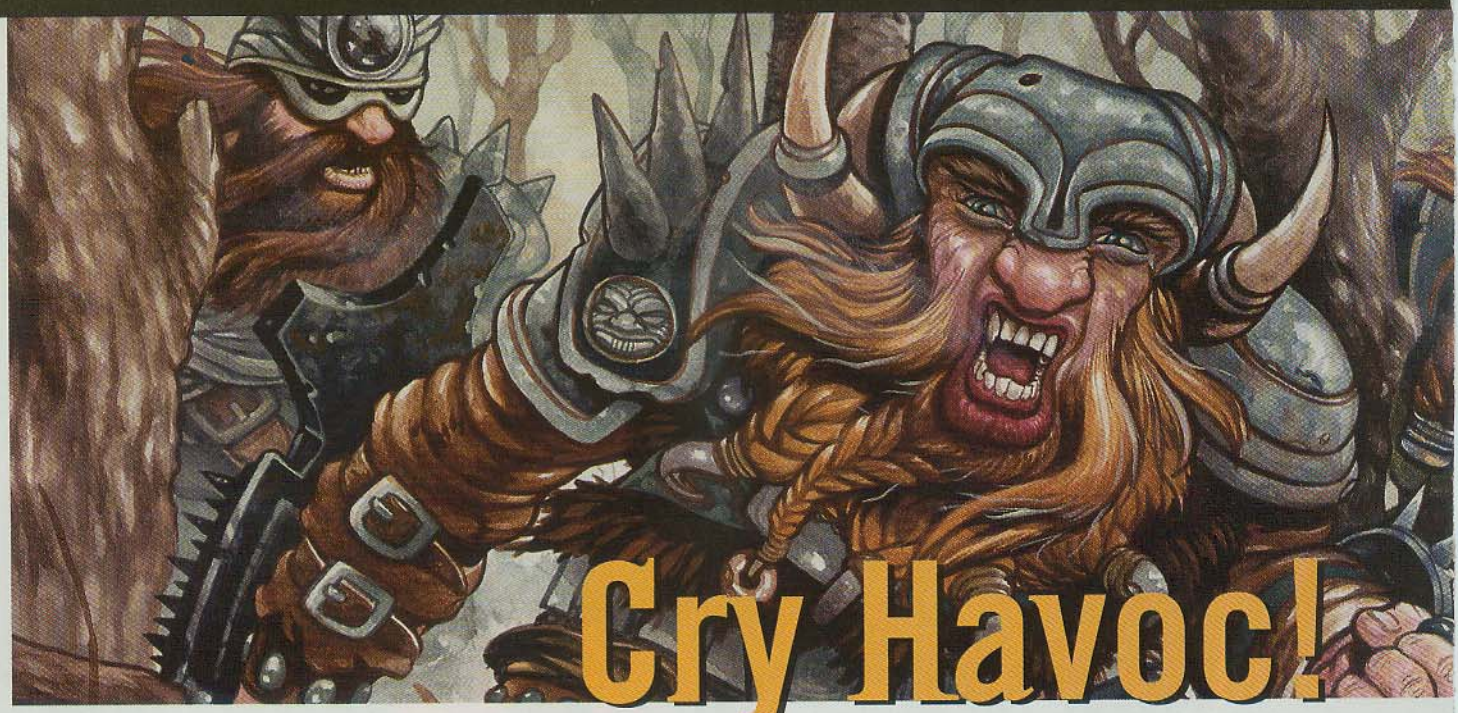
A red dragon! Scram!
durgarnbar a° // valergos°

Krusk is dead. He died with much bravery.
kruskmorn a // mornfarmar

Yeah, bad luck for him.
murgmal = gullendderkrusk a

Check out all of this gold! Tomorrow we'll be kings!
joraur° // kargloslardarnar°


Dragonscroll.com
Discounts So Big,
We Can't Advertise Them!
RPGs, CCGs, War
Games, Miniatures,
Anime, & More!
Order Securely Online,
Over the Phone,
or by Mail.
Online Auctions
20,000 Item Inventory
24 Hour Ship Times
www.dragonscroll.com
1-877-SCROLL-1
6689 Peachtree Ind. Blvd., Suite J
Norcross, GA 30092



Cry Havoc!

Dwarven Battle-cry Generator

by Owen K.C. Stephens • illustrated by Jeff Laubenstein

By the beard of the Soul-Forger!
The hammers of glory are upon you!
Guarr!

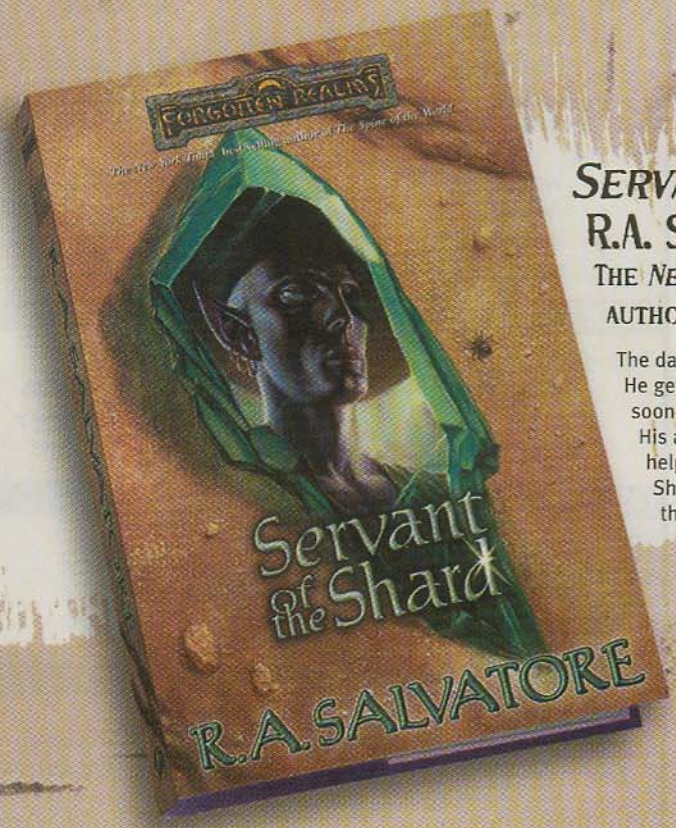
Each race has its own way of fighting. Most elves believe in subtle tactics and maneuvers. Many halflings prefer stealthy attacks. Virtually all half-orcs charge into battle swinging heavy weapons until nothing is left moving. Humans, if they believe in anything as a group, just want to get the job done. Dwarves are old hands at fighting and know it begins with a stirring battle-cry—the louder the better.

A battle-cry is more than just an expression to a dwarf. It's a declaration of war. Although it might seem bloodthirsty to other races, a rousing war-call lets a dwarf tell you who's about to take you down and why. Dwarves invoke their ancestors, weapons, god, history, and even personal virtues in a good battle-cry. A loud battle-cry is also a sign of courage, proof that the dwarf need not resort to stealth or subtlety to defeat his enemies. Some battle-cries have been used by dwarves for generations, while others are born from the heat of combat. They range from the lyrical to the downright inarticulate.

Dwarves don't feel restricted to just one cry per battle. Each new opponent, or tactic is a new opportunity for a dwarf to give voice to her best war-call. Among some dwarven clans, the art of the battle-cry is as highly regarded as epic poetry or even weaponsmithing. Many dwarves make it a point to never use the same war-call more than once in their lifetime, while others always open a battle with the same battle-cry that their revered ancestors used.

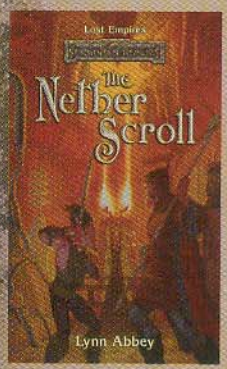
So how is a player or DM to come up with dozens of different battle-cries? Roll once on **Table A** to yield the basic framework of a battle-cry, and roll on subsequent tables to fill in the details. However, everyone should feel free to fill in the details with things appropriate to a particular campaign or dwarven character. If you roll a 1 on **Table A**, then roll on **Table 9** and **Table 8**, he might generate "I am the Waraxe of Moradin!" If the player happened not to worship Moradin, he might want to put his own god, or his king, or even a great dwarven hero in Moradin's place.

HEROES 32 VILLAINS 73



Servant of the Shard
R.A. Salvatore
THE *New York Times* BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF *The Spine of the World*

The dark elf Jarlaxle is bent on becoming all-powerful. He gets his greedy hands on the Crystal Shard, but soon the evil artifact's demonic force overcomes him. His assassin compatriot, Artemis Entreri, tries to help him break free, but the dark power of the Shard is too mighty. With time running out, they must seek help elsewhere.

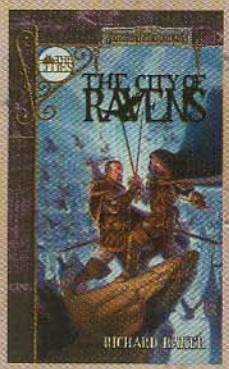


The Nether Scroll
LYNN ABBEY
LOST EMPIRES SERIES

A young magic-user sets out to avenge the murder of his teacher and save her son from a similar fate. Facing evil and treachery, he must brave the ruins of Dekanter to find a missing artifact that might be a clue to the source of all magic in the Forgotten Realms.

Shadow's Witness
PAUL KEMP
SEMBIA SERIES

Cale, the loyal butler of the Uskevren family, holds a terrible secret—he knows the city of Selgaunt's dark corners. When a ruthless evil is unleashed, Cale's ties to the underworld put the entire Uskevren family in jeopardy. He has only one chance to prove his loyalty.



The City of Ravens
RICHARD BAKER
THE CITIES SERIES

Jack Ravenwild's ambitions plunge him into a plot to destroy the city, a noble quest to find a lost hoard, and a conspiracy to seize the reins of power. Worse yet, Jack must choose between a life of freedom and saving the city he doesn't even know he loves.

FORGOTTEN REALMS®

UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURES

All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.

TABLE A: BATTLE CRIES

(roll 1d20)

1. I am the [Table 9] of [Table 8]!
2. [Table 6] of [Table 8] have come!
3. [Table 7] awaits!
4. By the [Table 2] [Table 5]!
5. Gnarr!
6. [Table 8]'s [Table 5]!
7. My [Table 9] seeks your [Table 7]!
8. From the [Table 1] of the [Table 9] I come!
9. Face the [Table 3] of [Table 8]!
10. By the [Table 5] of [Table 8]!
11. The [Table 3] of the [Table 2] dwarves has come!
12. The [Table 9](s) of [Table 3] are upon you!
13. For the [Table 1] of [Table 8]!
14. [Table 7] before [Table 4]!
15. Remember the [Table 1] of [Table 6]!
16. The [Table 2] [Table 9] has come!
17. No [Table 4]!
18. For [Table 8]'s honor!
19. Your [Table 4] shall be your downfall!
20. [Table 6] of the [Table 5] have brought your [Table 7]!

TABLE 1: PLACES

(roll 1d6)

1. Hearth
2. Fortress
3. Tome
4. Dwelling
5. Lands
6. Mountains

TABLE 2: VIRTUES

(roll 1d6)

1. Brave
2. Stalwart
3. Honorable
4. Noble
5. Fierce
6. Fearless

TABLE 3: WRATH

(roll 1d8)

1. Wrath
2. Power
3. Vengeance
4. Might
5. Glory
6. Ire
7. Retribution
8. Fire

TABLE 4: FLAWS

(roll 1d6)

1. Cowardice
2. Evil
3. Fear
4. Weakness
5. Treachery
6. Dishonor

TABLE 5: ICONS

(roll 1d6)

1. Beard
2. Forge
3. Rune
4. Name
5. Blood
6. Anvil

TABLE 6: DWARVES

(roll 1d10)

1-2. The sons
3-4. The blood
5-6. The clansmen
7-8. The bears
9-10. The warriors

TABLE 7: DOOMS

(roll 1d10)

1-2. Death
3-4. Defeat
5-6. Destruction
7-8. Devastation
9-10. Doom

TABLE 8: PERSONAGES

(roll 1d8)

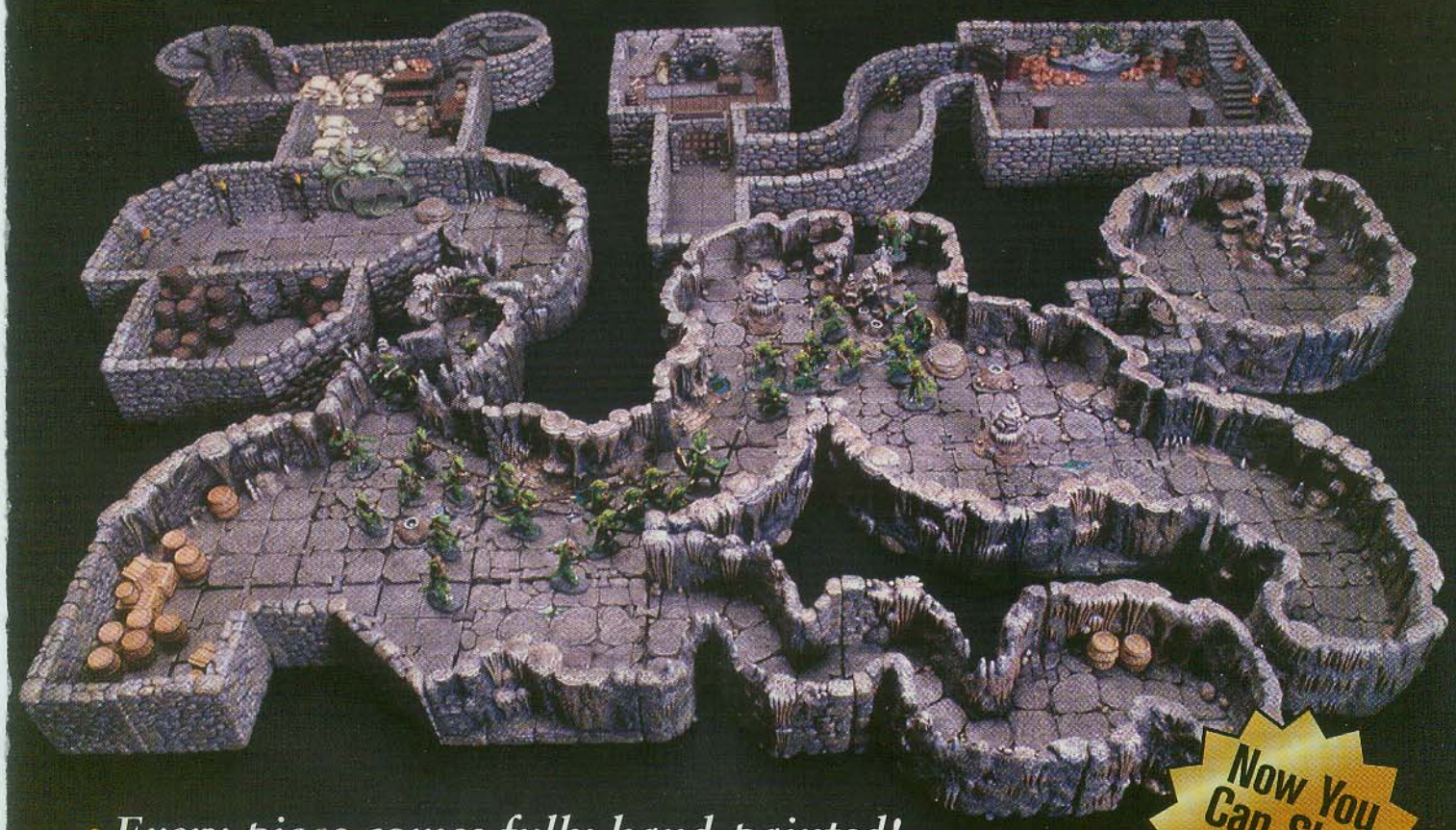
1. The All-Father
2. The Creator
3. The Dwarf father
4. My forefathers
5. My elders
6. The clan
7. Moradin
8. The Soul-Forger

TABLE 9: WEAPONS

(roll 1d8)

1. Gauntlet
2. Greataxe
3. Hammer
4. Urgrosh
5. Waraxe
6. Warhammer
7. Steel
8. Fist

Add New Dimension To Your Campaign



- *Every piece comes fully hand-painted!*
- *Amazingly detailed and cast in durable resin!*
- *Huge variety of sets and accessories to choose from!*

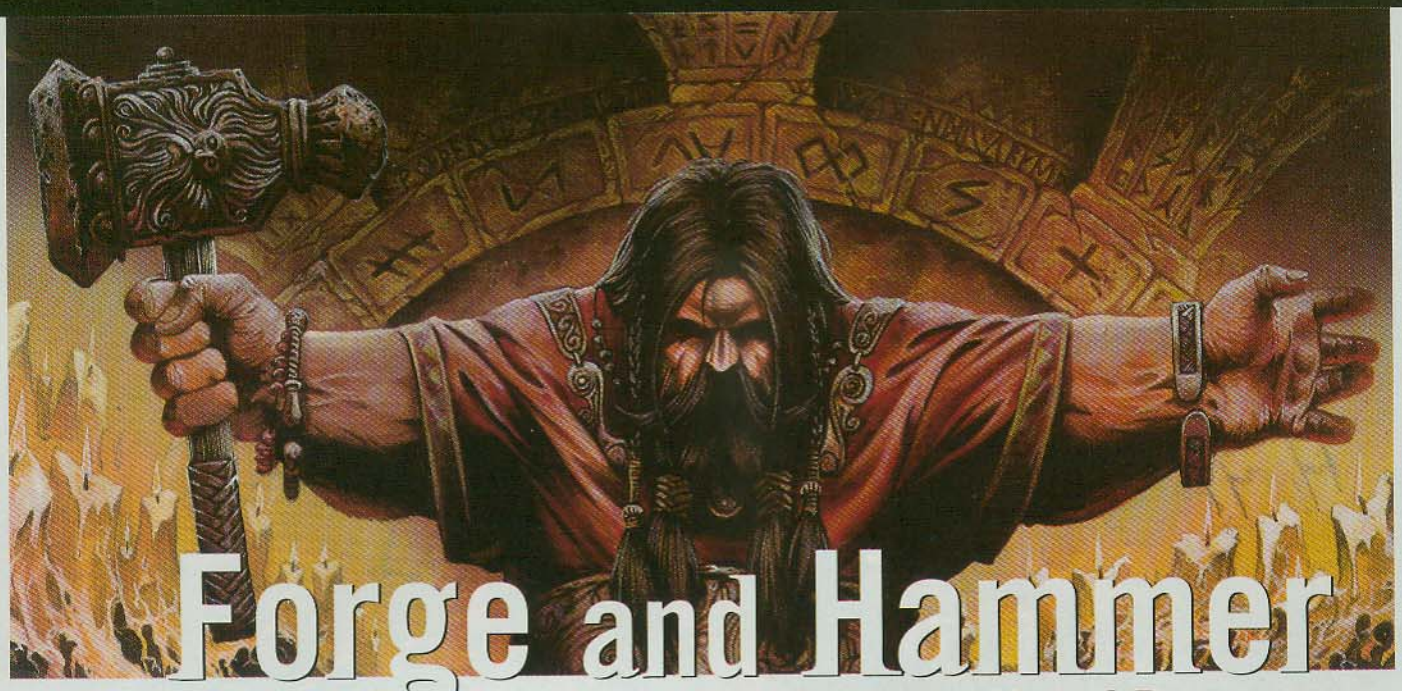
Now You Can Shop Online!
dwarvenforge.com

MasterMaze™ is an interlocking, interchangeable dungeon system meticulously sculpted, cast in durable resin, and then painted by skilled artisans. No other company offers such magnificent accessories for 25-28mm miniature gaming ready to use right out of the box. Dwarven Forge has expanded its extensive product line again to bring you the cavern set, dungeon accessories, medieval furniture, narrow passages and, the first of its miniatures series, lizardmen! Everything comes fully hand-painted so you can spend more time gaming.

To see the complete Dwarven Forge catalog and place orders, visit us at: www.dwarvenforge.com

MasterMaze™
The Ultimate 3-D Dungeon System for Miniatures

The savage Lizardman Tribe launch our figure line (top) and the Narrow Passage Set adds great new tactical possibilities.



Forge and Hammer

The Secret Life of Dwarves

by Wolfgang Baur • illustrated by Wayne Reynolds

This is the hammer your grandelder used to forge the chieftain's axe, the axe his son still carries.

This is the hammer your great-grandfather used when he held court among the Guild of Smiths and dispensed justice.

This is the hammer your grandmother used as a forge-priestess of Berronar, shaping gold into the beard-ring she gave your grandfather.

This is the hammer that built the new gates of Hammerkeep in my hands.

This is your hammer now, my son.

Hallways flicker with lantern light; tunnels ring with the sound of steel on steel; smoky chambers shine with the red-hot glare of forge-light. Dwarves live in a world of fire and iron, of stone and darkness. But dwarves are more than smiths and warriors; they are also practiced merchants, carpenters, and priests; loving fathers and doting mothers; and pious sons and daughters.

To dwarves, smoky underground caverns are familiar and comfortable. But hidden underground as they are, much of dwarven lives, rituals, and customs remain a mystery to outsiders. Read on, and discover a "typical" dwarven life from beginning to end. Enter a dwarven stronghold, and see how dwarven souls are shaped, live, and die.

BIRTH & CHILDHOOD

The birth of a dwarf is rather mysterious; the ceremonies and taboos surrounding it are closely guarded secrets. All that is known for sure is that the clan matriarch gives the child its first name a day after it's born. This Rite of First Naming is celebrated by the women of the clan. The child is not allowed out of the clan's holdings until the rite is celebrated; taking a child out of the tunnels might expose it to the corrupting influences of the sun and sky, rather than the safety of the earth and stone. Outsiders are not invited to the celebrations held among the parents' clan.

Dwarven pregnancies last about ten months; during this time, mothers never leave the clan holding. Dwarven women can have children once every ten years from roughly age 50 until the age of 150; a dwarf is not weaned before the age of eight or nine. Twins are rare.

Once the child is born, named, and celebrated, it is largely ignored. In fact, dwarven children are not considered fit company for others until the boys grow beards and the girls reach menarche (around age twenty-eight). Dwarves rarely see children of other clans, only their own. The children can remain this isolated because the childrens' quarters are part of the clan holdings, separate from the apprentices' and warriors' holdings.

During childhood, dwarves play, yell, and associate with the opposite sex far more freely than at any other time in their lives. Young dwarves learn to speak and play at both mining and parenthood. They engage in mock combat, and learn to shape and read dwarven runes. They play only with other children of their own clan, speaking the clan dialect and learning its customs. This early emphasis on blood relatives creates a lifelong tendency among dwarves to favor clan interests over any others. Their mothers are their teachers until the age of about twenty-four, when childhood ends and adolescence begins. From this time on, fathers are responsible for their children. The fathers must find good matches for them, first with a mentor, then with a mate.

ADOLESCENCE & APPRENTICESHIP

Between the ages of twenty-three to twenty-four—certainly by twenty-six—most young dwarves are apprenticed to learn a trade. Poor dwarves whose families cannot afford an apprenticeship usually begin working alongside adults at this age. Dwarves who begin work this young are considered normal; but they are not expected to work a full day or carry the same load as an adult.

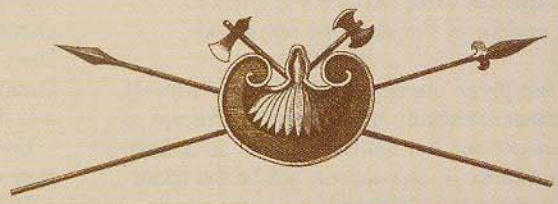
A clan always seeks to apprentice its young to the right master. In many cases, this means carrying on a family tradition and apprenticing to a respected great-aunt or great-uncle. It's generally considered good practice to skip a generation with apprenticeships, as a child's aunts and uncles might spoil their niece or nephew. The older generation, with great-nieces and nephews, is considered less indulgent. Even among apprenticeship within a clan, a carefully worded contract spells out the duties, term, and costs of the apprentice's tutelage.

A lavish "fostering fee" is usually paid to the master at the start of the apprenticeship, and a portion of that fee is returned when the apprentice completes the term. For high-status professions—such as priests, goldsmiths, or skalds—the apprentice's fee can easily

RITES OF PASSAGE

Dwarves love formalized celebrations, which they classify under the general term "rites." These celebrations usually last a day and a night and are overseen by the clan matriarch or patriarch. In some cases, a priest is also involved, such as a priest of Moradin for Leaving the Hearth, Clanggedin for a Battle Rite, or a priestess of Berronar for the Mother's Rite. When no priest is available, which is frequent, the eldest dwarf presides.

Lavish gifts are not expected, though the clan leader and relatives might give gifts as described below. The most important rites follow:



Mother's Rite

Dwarven women celebrate a birth by gathering together to choose the right name (based on history, parentage, and tradition), then getting the matriarch to give the name her blessing. Little else is known about this celebration, even among the male dwarves of a clan.

Rite of Leaving the Hearth

When a dwarven adolescent is old enough to be apprenticed or to begin work, the child's father grants the young dwarf a name and throws a feast. Typical gifts are drinking horns or woolen cloaks.

Battle Rite

A company or battalion of warriors sometimes takes a group name (such as "The Iron Axe Brotherhood") and swears blood brotherhood before a great battle. If the battle is successful, the name is considered successful and kept; lost battles generate no worthy nicknames. Blood brothers acknowledge their friendship regardless of the outcome; all blood brothers are treated as members of one another's clans. Typical gifts are weapons or armor.

Rite of Leaving the Hall

At the end of an apprenticeship, a dwarf chooses his own name. At the same time, the dwarf becomes an adult, can own property, and gains legal standing in the holding's affairs. Before this rite, the mother, father, and master are responsible for the dwarf's behavior. The dwarf is typically given a hammer or other symbol of his trade as a gift, as well as golden armbands.

Runaway's Rite

The only ritual rarely celebrated with a priest, this rite grants a name just as the Leaving the Hall rite. The difference is that this rite usually begins a time of wandering exile for the runaway. No gifts are exchanged, but the runaway is often provided with basic tools and food.

Marriage Rites

When dwarves become husband and wife, they choose a name to share. Sometimes called a "hearth-name," it refers to the household they establish within their clan. A hearth that grows large and old enough sometimes becomes an independent clan. For more details, see "Courtship and Marriage." Typical gifts include golden rings, ribbons, children's toys (from the parents of bride and groom), and cutlery and crockery.

Rite of Return

At a dwarf's death, all her deeds, victories, accomplishments, names, spouses, and children are remembered. Her names are returned to the clan and her body returns to the earth. No gifts are exchanged, though offerings of metal, beer, and scalps are sometimes left at the burial site.

Closing of the Forge, Kindling of the Hearth

These two ceremonies start and end the High Holidays festival. They are an outgrowth of the forge rites celebrated by every smith in his role as a lay priest. Food and drink are shared, but no gifts are given except to the clan's smith; they receive new hammers and bars of metal from the chief and priests.

DWARVEN NAMING

Dwarven names can easily confuse the non-dwarf, as they are often much longer than the names of members of other races. Dwarves live longer than most other races, though, so their names reflect the many changes they go through in their lives. Here's an example of the naming process in the life of a typical dwarf.

At her birth, the infant dwarf Gloribryn is so named by her mother and the other female dwarves of her clan. They chose to name her after her great-grandsire Glorak, a great warrior of the clan, and her grandmother Nalbryn.

Gloribryn is also given the hearth name of her parents, which is Stonejoiner (to signify her father's profession as a master stone miner and her mother's career as a diplomat). This name, Gloribryn Stonejoiner, will be the name she carries throughout her childhood.

When she is twenty-four, Gloribryn is named by her father at the Rite of Leaving the Hearth when she is apprenticed to an officer in the clan's army. The name he selects is Delgunn, after her great-grandelder, who died defending the clan centuries before. As an apprentice, she will be known as Delgunn Stonejoiner.

At the age of thirty-nine, Delgunn completes her apprenticeship. At the Rite of Leaving the Hall, she takes the name Dwodeth. Her unmarried adult name is then Dwodeth Stonejoiner.

Fifteen years later, Dwodeth's family arrange a marriage with a young jeweler. At their marriage, they choose the hearth name of Diamondaxe. A few years later, her husband is slain in an attack on the clan. Dwodeth remarries a few years after that to an engineer, and they take the hearth name Strongarm.

Dwodeth then joins a group of dwarven warriors, and they name themselves the Bloodfists.

Dwodeth's complete name is now Gloribryn Delgunn Dwodeth Stonejoiner Diamondaxe Strongarm of the Bloodfists—but just Dwodeth Strongarm to her friends.

run into thousands or even tens of thousands of gold pieces. If the fee is accepted, the new apprentice celebrates the Rite of Leaving the Hearth and is sent off with a bundle of clothes and good wishes. Dwarves unable to afford an apprenticeship also celebrate the same rite, though in a more modest fashion. They continue to live at their parent's hearth until the age of fifty.

Occasionally, a dwarf is apprenticed to another clan within the same dwarven holding, or even to another holding or kingdom entirely. These cases require careful negotiations and more lavish gifts, but they keep the flow of knowledge going between the dwarven kingdoms. Those dwarves who return from an out-of-clan or an out-of-holding apprenticeship are generally held in the highest regard.

Once apprentices are packed off to learn a trade, they have little time for play. They must work hard, and their mentors are feared as often as respected—an apprentice can be scolded, beaten, denied food, or otherwise punished with impunity. Apprenticeships are crucibles meant to forge dwarven greatness, and not all dwarves come through unscathed. A typical apprenticeship lasts about 10-12 years. For difficult trades, such as smithwork or sorcery, a twenty-five-year apprenticeship is not unheard-of. All apprenticeships must end by the age of fifty, when dwarves become adults. Some masters refuse to release their apprentices until they reach that age, despite any progress or skill the apprentice might demonstrate.

Not all apprenticeships succeed. Some apprentices run away rather than endure a bad master. In these cases, the runaway's fellow apprentices throw a small, rather sad feast (called the Runaway's Rite) to mark the occasion. Those who leave an apprenticeship shamefully often become wanderers while the shame of their failure dies down at their clan hall. This time of "wandering apprenticeship" lasts from ten to twenty years.

When an apprentice has learned all she can, the master generally organizes and funds a feast to celebrate the granting of journeyman status called the Rite of Leaving the Hall (see the "Rites" sidebar). The journeyman dwarf then either establishes her own shop, continues working with the masters of her trade (but having left the apprentices' hall), or joins her clan's workers in her trade (if she was apprenticed to another holding or clan).

UNTIL A DWARF MARRIES, HE OR SHE IS NEVER CONSIDERED ENTIRELY ADULT.

COURTSHIP & MARRIAGE

Many humans seem to find the arranged marriages of dwarves rather amusing, while most dwarves consider humans' unregulated and carefree courtship decadent and self-indulgent. It's a touchy topic, but some information is available about dwarven courtship, romance, and marriage.

Dwarves consider arranged marriages a cornerstone of an orderly society. Until a dwarf marries, he or she is never considered entirely adult. Indeed, unmarried dwarves are sometimes viewed as "dangerous" because they lack the bonds of attachment to younger generations. Thus, dwarven fathers often harp on their children to accept a match early. In dwarven terms, early means by age sixty.

A dwarven courtship is always intertwined with familial obligations. Dwarves from certain well-established family lines are expected to intermarry every so often (at least once a century). Failure to renew such dynastic

links can result in strained relationships between two clans, refusals to foster apprentices, and eventually a change in clan alliances.

The marriage ceremonies themselves are long and solemn. Roughly twenty dwarves are expected to testify to the fitness of the match, including both sets of parents and all the grandparents. The bride always braids a ring into her groom's beard, and he reciprocates by giving her as many gold and silver armbands as she can hold and he can afford. Various weapons decorate the ceremony; most couples swear their loyalty and love for each other on a battleaxe (some clans prefer a warhammer). In addition to the relatives, two witnesses from outside the clan are asked to give testimonials to the strength and worthiness of the match, ending each testimonial with a proper toast. Failure or refusal to act as a witness is considered a terrible insult and can lead to bloodshed.

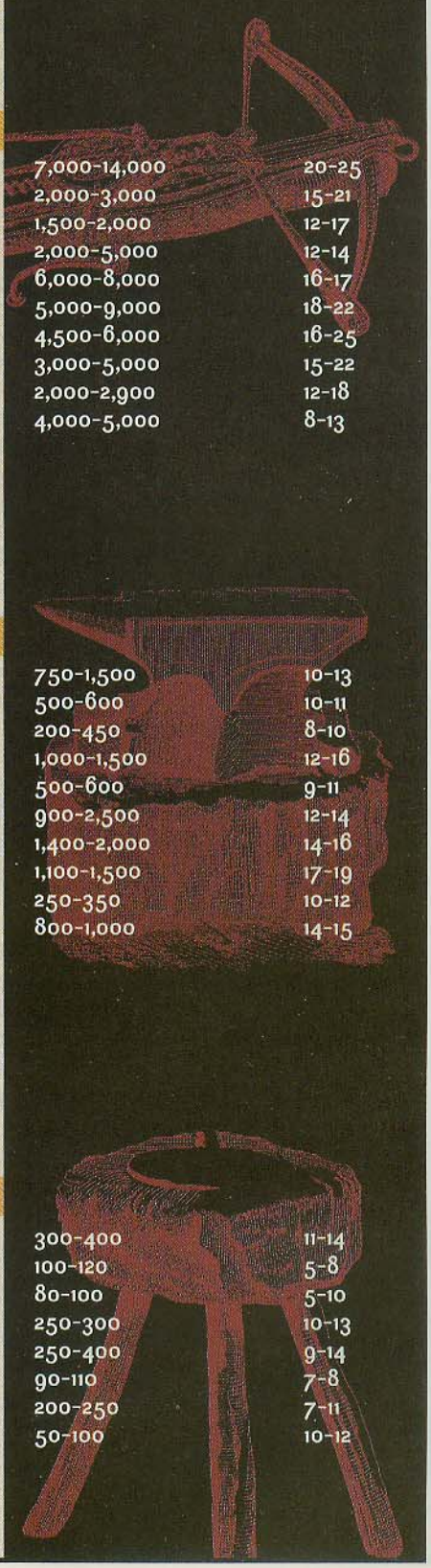
After the ceremony, beer, mead, and ale flow freely, food is plentiful, and gifts are offered to the happy couple. The clan matriarch and patriarch provide the final toasts and testimonials to the bride and groom, respectively, after which dancing, singing, and crude jokes increase over the course of the feast.

Some marriages end in divorce. Long-lived as they are, dwarves accept divorce as a necessary element of the law. However, there is no rite associated with it. Dwarven divorces are consummated when one spouse piles a few belongings of the other outside the door. Divorces cannot be withheld; if one spouse demands it, it happens. However, they can be complicated by haggling over who owns what. By tradition, each spouse owns all the tools of his or her trade, and a mother retains custody of children under the age of twenty-four; fathers keep custody of those twenty-four or older.

Finally, dwarves are known for remarriage. Indeed, given their long and violent lives, it's inevitable that many dwarves become widows or widowers while they are still in their prime. Some dwarves have as many as a dozen spouses over a lifetime, but four or five is more typical. Customarily, these are counted as either Thanta (spring) or Zhemla (winter) marriages; the former are the marriages of a dwarf's younger days, the ones that

FOSTERING FEES

Trade	Fee (in gold pieces)	Years
Upper Class		
Priest, sorcerer	7,000-14,000	20-25
Master smith, master mason	2,000-3,000	15-21
Engineer, sage	1,500-2,000	12-17
Banker, assayer, treasurer	2,000-5,000	12-14
Clan chief, judge	6,000-8,000	16-17
General	5,000-9,000	18-22
Jeweler, goldsmith	4,500-6,000	16-25
Weaponsmith, armorer	3,000-5,000	15-22
Silversmith, coppersmith	2,000-2,900	12-18
Skald	4,000-5,000	8-13
Middle Class		
Ironsmith	750-1,500	10-13
Cooper, wainwright, carpenter	500-600	10-11
Gardener	200-450	8-10
Mason, master miner	1,000-1,500	12-16
Brewer, miller, baker	500-600	9-11
Merchant, scribe, accountant	900-2,500	12-14
Officer	1,400-2,000	14-16
Alchemist, machinist, printer	1,100-1,500	17-19
Quartermaster, courier	250-350	10-12
Gunner	800-1,000	14-15
Lower Class		
Stonecutter, miner	300-400	11-14
Stoker, lumberjack	100-120	5-8
Groom, carter, shepherd or goatherd	80-100	5-10
Chandler, weaver, cheesemaker	250-300	10-13
Soldier, bodyguard, scout	250-400	9-14
Hunter	90-110	7-8
Tinker	200-250	7-11
Musician	50-100	10-12



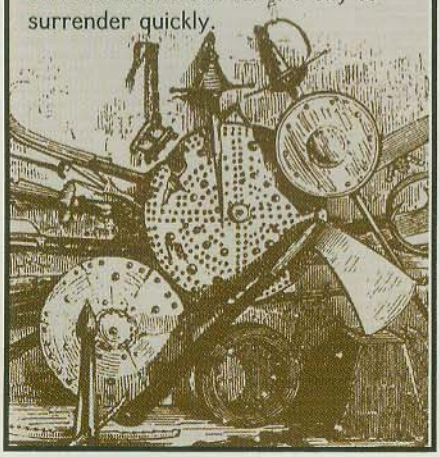
THE GREAT ARTS: SMITHWORK, MINING, AND WAR.

Dwarves consider three tasks more worthy than any others: mining ore, shaping metal, and using their finely-made weapons to wage war against their traditional enemies: giants and goblinkind.

Dwarven metalworkers are especially attuned to the elements of earth and fire, and their smithwork is among the finest known, far surpassing the achievements of most smiths of other races. For more information about dwarven forgecraft, see "The Heart of the Forge" in issue #245.

Dwarven mining is a dangerous but honorable trade. Its practitioners mine not only iron, copper, silver, and gold but also mithril and adamantite. Miners must work closely with engineers and carpenters to keep their mineshafts both productive and safe; water, gas, collapse, and monsters from the Underdark are constant threats. While most shafts are too small for elves and humans to visit comfortably, some of the main access shafts are larger (to allow the use of mules to pull out wagonloads of ore and tailings).

Dwarven warcraft is a matter of superior weaponry, group tactics, training, and dogged persistence against all opposition. Dwarves fight in extremely cohesive units; few humans can recall dwarves being routed by anything less than magical attack or dragonfire. Most dwarves march out of battle the same way they march in: steadily and with grim determination. In siegecraft, dwarven miners, siege engines, and entrenchments can force a city to surrender quickly.



have yielded grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Zhemla marriages are the marriages of an older dwarf with snowy hair; these have, at most, produced a few children. Many Zhemla marriages are as much political as amorous, especially among the upper classes. The rarest marriages of all, those that last for two hundred years or more, are called Vesti, or summer marriages, and these are the ones that most often give rise to new clans.

ADULTHOOD

After the age of fifty (and often long before), dwarves follow one of five broad career paths as adults. The various crafts all have their own traditional holidays (such as the Blessing of the Anvils in midwinter, to secure Moradin's help for another year), special rules of conduct for their members, and their responsibilities to the stronghold. None is considered especially more honorable than the others, though the military and academic paths are those most likely to lead to leadership of the clan. The mercantile path is usually the most financially rewarding, and the craft and agricultural paths are considered the most spiritual. The five paths are:

Mercantile (merchant, banker, assayer, treasurer, courier)

Military (soldier, scout, engineer)

Craft (miner, smith, carpenter)

Agricultural (brewer, shepherd, miller)

Academic (sage, scribe, sorcerer)

With time, those who follow these trades gain leadership roles as a chieftain, clan elder, or a clan patriarch or matriarch. Craft dwarves and agricultural dwarves are those most likely to take on religious duties as a forge priest, hearth priest, or the like.

Once a dwarf has chosen his path, he is expected to excel; second-best is nothing to be proud of. Dwarves are very competitive adults, perhaps more than is healthy.

For instance, a pair of dwarven smiths from two different clans might boast about their skill until a challenge is made. From that point on, pride is at stake. The smiths might spend weeks striving to make the finest weapons they can, driving their apprentices harshly to create a masterwork. Then, the testing comes. Among smiths, the finest work is tested to destruction: striking swords against stone, heating them in magical fire, or bending them until they break. Armorers test chestplates against crossbow bolts fired from close range. In the end, only one smith's work can survive.

Other trades have similar traditions. During "scalp season," dwarven warriors strive to bring home more goblin or orc scalps than anyone else. Each shift of miners strives to cart more ore than any other, while each clan tracks the weight of metals carefully to claim the title of "Gold-Lucky" or "Iron-Lucky" for a given year or decade. Weavers vie with one another to produce more and better cloth-of-gold tapestries. Sometimes rivals will strive to outdo each other in generosity, such as two clans' master brewers who each seek to win acclaim by giving away barrels of their best. Each dwarf believes in his heart that hard work is its own reward—and dwarven society is the richer because of their efforts. Dwarven "poverty" is luxurious by human standards.

DWARVES ARE VERY COMPETITIVE, PERHAPS MORE THAN IS HEALTHY.

CLAN, FAMILY, AND HOLIDAYS

A typical dwarven family might number thirty to sixty or more, and large clans can easily include a hundred or more members scattered in a handful of delvings. Dwarven clans always include members of at least five, and often six, generations under a single great hall, including great-great-great-grandparents (also called grandsires or great-grandelders), great-great-grandparents (sires or grandelders), great-grandparents (elders), grandparents, parents, and children. The eldest dwarves in any holding are always referred to as "patriarch" and "matriarch" by their kinfolk, and "clan elder" for dwarves of any other clan. Humans, halflings, and other short-lived races are easily confused by the number of dwarven terms for varying degrees of relationship over six generations. For them, using the term "grandsire" is an acceptable bit of flattery for addressing any dwarven elder.

Elder siblings (and they might be as much as fifty years older than their younger brothers and sisters) are expected to help rear their siblings as long as they live in their parent's hall. The arrival of yet another child or relation usually makes little difference in such large households. Children apprenticed to older relatives are expected to bunk with the other apprentices. Exceptions are sometimes made for the spoiled children of the wealthiest dwarves.

Dwarves from the middle generations sometimes leave their homes just to get away from their relatives, especially after a failed marriage or apprenticeship. These wanderers are almost always welcomed back when they return—the wandering is not exile or banishment. Upon their return, they are often given back the very same tools and weapons they abandoned a decade earlier, and little is said about the intervening years.

Clans and families are the social center of dwarven life; outsiders, even members of other clans, are not always welcome during the holidays. While a whole dwarven delving or kingdom might celebrate certain events (such as the Founding Day of the delving, Moradin's Hammerfest, or the Blessing of the Anvils), only the High Holidays are open to outsiders.

Many other days are celebrated strictly within the clan. These include the naming days of the clan patriarch and matriarch, the name days of notable ancestors, and holidays celebrated by only a portion of the population, such as the Apprentice Revel, Daughter's Day, and Miner's Day.

In general, dwarven holidays do not celebrate set days so often as they celebrate important days in an individual's life. A marriage between two beloved members of the clan is a bigger holiday than the celebration of a long-dead founder's name day.

DWARVEN PROFESSIONS

Dwarves are just as divided by class as any other social species, perhaps even more so. Here are some typical trades that a dwarf might undertake as a clan-leading aristocrat, a stolid burgher, or a hard-working, impoverished tunnel-rat.

Upper Class

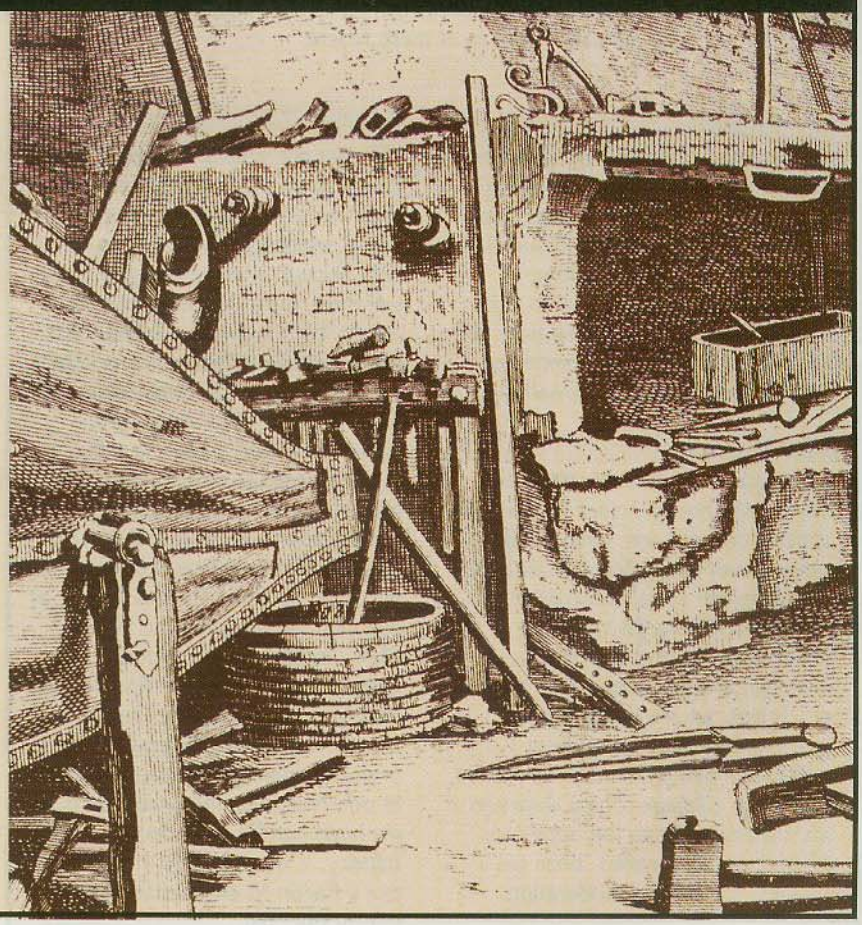
master mason, engineer, sage, judge, jeweler, skald, goldsmith, banker, treasurer, sorcerer, weaponsmith, silversmith, general, assayer, armorer.

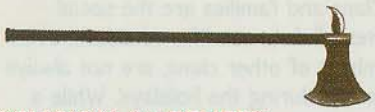
Middle Class

merchant, miller, baker, cooper, wainwright, scribe, accountant, carpenter, master miner, officer, courier, printer, alchemist, machinist, quartermaster, gunner.

Lower Class

lumberjack, groom, carter, alpine shepherd or goatherd, chandler, weaver, cheesemaker, soldier, bodyguard, scout, hunter, musician.





RELIGION & BELIEFS

Dwarves worship Moradin, the Soul-Forger, who created all the fathers of the dwarven race. The mothers of the dwarven race go unmentioned, but it's not a good idea to bring them up to a dwarf unless you want to hear an hour-long lecture on Moradin's children and the peculiarities of the dwarven creation saga.

Dwarves have more priests per capita than elves, half-orcs, or humans, but it's not always clear that a dwarf holds a religious office, because they rarely wear vestments or outward signs other than a small holy symbol. Instead, they are smiths, soldiers, or even merchants who see themselves as priests in addition to, rather than instead of, their other roles. A dwarven priest's trade is often related to his worship; the priest of Moradin is likely a smith, whereas a merchant-priest is more likely the follower of a god of greed or travel.

DWARVES ARE CAPABLE OF MARCHING TO THEIR DEATHS, KNOWING EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE DOING.

While dwarves believe in helping themselves, the sacred sagas and hammer chants of dwarven faith stress stoic acceptance of hard times, perseverance, and loyalty, up to and beyond death. Dwarves are fully capable of marching to their deaths, knowing exactly what they are doing, if they believe the cause is worthwhile. Indeed, warriors who die with this knowledge are often the greatest heroes of dwarven sagas, retold every winter at the Blessing of the Anvils.

At the same time, tales of Moradin and other dwarven gods reflect a great joy in dwarven triumphs, and dwarves learn the art of bragging quite early. Indeed, dwarves are rarely shy—when they have mastered a skill, they sing their own praises. When times are hard, they boast of their skill to give themselves courage and strength. Other races sometimes mistake this confidence for pride or arrogance.

For such a pragmatic lot, dwarves are a surprisingly superstitious bunch. Guided by omens, priests use runes to divine auspicious occasions for beginning an engineering project or launching an attack. Twins are considered lucky, and most dwarves also have lucky weapons, talismans, or runes.

In general, dwarven beliefs reflect a culture-wide siege mentality. Dwarves value persistence, skill, and diligence far more than inspiration or luck. Preparation is the watchword against danger. The saying "No more foresight than an elf, and no more patience than a human" is a slur that no dwarven child wants to hear from her parents. All dwarves are planners, doers, and fighters, and in a dwarven mind, strangers are always potential threats rather than potential allies.

DWARVEN HIERARCHY & LAW

Dwarves believe in their hearts that everyone has a place in the clan. Dwarves who disagree with this sentiment often enough generally find that

DWARVEN FEASTS & TOASTING

This article has several times referred to dwarven feasts for special occasions, such as apprenticing, marriage, blood brotherhood, and so on. Dwarven feasts are a form of entertainment and bonding within and between clans, and they are also displays of social status. No dwarf wants to hold a "weak-beered feast." Here's a summary of what actually happens at these feasts:

Entertainment

A dwarven feast features warriors singing battle hymns and retelling their greatest triumphs; poets relating tales of love, birth, and survival in hard times; and witty, long-winded toasts. Even dwarven riddling contests can be taken over the top if combined with a demonstration of tumbling or fire-breathing.

Food & Drink

Beverages include beer, ale, mead (fermented honey), cider (fermented apples), brandy, and wine. Foods include everything from roast boar to mushroom soup, and from rye bread to millet-laced stew. Shepherd's pie and enormous sausages are also popular at dwarven feasts, as are whole apples, pears, and quince preserves. Vegetables usually consist of pickled greens or cabbage. Some dwarven specialities (such as the hops-infused delicacy called "beer pie") are best sampled in moderation.

Toasts

"Toasts are boasts with beer" is a common dwarven saying, and many dwarves are bragging, self-aggrandizing windbags. But failing to be bold enough when offering a toast will meet with silence or a weak cheer—both signs of a failed toast. Many outsiders feel nervous offering a toast at a dwarven celebration, but the basic rules are simple: Never interrupt a saga to offer a toast, never fail to mention your host if you are a guest, and (if possible) praise both clan and family. A typical toast might be "Let us raise our cups to Einkil Torunn, father of our clan, victor over the Black Claw Orcs, and now proud great-grandfather of another fine Torunn daughter, long may she live!" It's considered especially gracious to praise multiple generations of a clan at one time; heaping praise on a single head can be considered rude flattery, if done poorly. Pounding one's flagon to emphasize points is purely optional.

Paper or Plastic?

Hey, passing GO and putting in that last piece of the puzzle are still fun. And at The Game Keeper® stores, you'll find the widest range of games anywhere, from games you play on your tabletop to those you play on your desktop. So, whether you're into roleplaying and strategy or cards and video games, you can find the games you want to have fun with.

The Game Keeper® game stores.

We know games.

www.wizards.com/gamekeeper

THE GAME KEEPER®

WIZARDS OF THE COAST and THE GAME KEEPER are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. ©2000 Wizards.

their "place" is outside the Great Hall's doors. All adult dwarves qualify as thanes in a clan; all master smiths qualify as priests in dwarven terms. Titles in the nobility are granted by the clan chieftain (who appoints the members of his guard) and by the priesthood (who choose which smiths to induct into their mysteries). The priestly and noble hierarchies are shown in the sidebar.

Many dwarven priests are also smiths of some kind (thus the forge-priest is a familiar sight to those who know dwarves). For a race made at the Soul Forge, the combination of metalworking and religion is a given.

The alliances and rivalries among the dwarven kingdoms are more complex than can be discussed here, and dwarven feudalism is certainly not quite the same as human feudalism. Simply put, though, the rights and obligations of the various earls and clan chieftains to kings located in distant mountains are much looser than the obligations of earls and chieftains who live within the same vast delving as their king.

Nobles are expected to brand, flog, fine, and even banish offenders against law and tradition (much the same thing, in dwarven terms). Property rights and contract law are also well-developed among dwarves, and an entire clan will happily punish humans, elves, and others who break oaths sworn to dwarven merchants.

DEATH & BURIAL

Dwarves are remarkably stoic about death, compared to other races. Although they live centuries longer than humans, they do not fear death quite as much. Dwarves die well.

For example, an elderly dwarf might put on weapons and armor during a siege and quite matter-of-factly say, "I go out to meet my death," thus allowing others still besieged a better chance of survival on limited supplies. This sort of sacrifice is most commonly seen in dwarven warriors, but also among adventurers. Dying with style is considered a sign of nobility in a warrior.

Although this attitude sometimes turns lost causes into stunning victories, it also leads to an early grave for many dwarves. The rites of a dwarven funeral are always simple, including testimonials from comrades, a recitation of the parentage and children of the deceased, and finally apportioning weapons, armor, and other portable goods to his descendants. Non-portable goods generally belong to a clan, rather than to an individual.

Most warriors and smiths are cremated, but other dwarves are buried deep in the earth that sheltered them all their lives. Offerings at grave sites provide a form of ancestor worship; some clans find this worship of the dead heretical and blasphemous, and it remains a contentious issue that divides hill dwarves from the deeper dwarves.

DWARVEN ADVENTURERS

Those dwarves who are adventurers usually choose such a path because they have had to leave their clan as runaway apprentices, scouts, the sole survivors of a stronghold overrun by orcs, or divorced or widowed warriors seeking a fresh start. They might seem grim, but they are also reliable, loyal to a fault, and tougher than any three elves put together. Raise a cup and toast the might of the dwarves.

FOR A RACE MADE AT THE SOUL FORGE, THE COMBINATION OF METALWORKING AND RELIGION IS A GIVEN.

One right is clearly given to each dwarven holding rather than to any king: the right to name judges and interpret the law. Dwarven justice is a local matter, in a way that warfare, taxation, and mining rights rarely are.

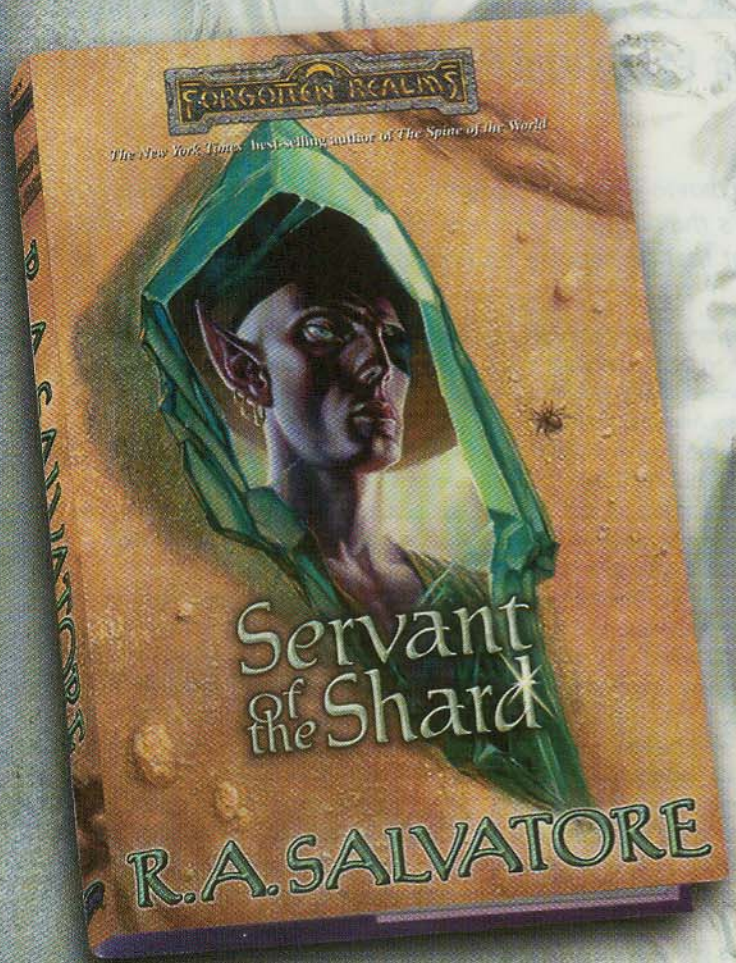
DWARVEN TITLES

Aristocratic	Religious
King/Queen	Priest-King/Priestess-Queen
Earl	High Priest/Priestess
Clan Chieftain	Priest/Priestess
Clan Elder	Forge-Priest/Priestess
House Guard	Forge Brother/Sister
Skald	Master Smith
Thane	Chanter
	Smith

Note that priest-kings and priestess-queens are extremely rare; a dwarven holding usually has one aristocratic and one religious hierarchy.

Possession is Everything

Everyone wants the Crystal Shard. But not everyone can handle its dark power. A treacherous elf and a cold assassin form an unholy alliance to share the artifact's sinister force. But when these two depraved figures inevitably battle to control the Shard ... the Shard instead starts to control them.


FORGOTTEN REALMS
The New York Times best-selling author of The Spine of the World
R.A. SALVATORE
Servant of the Shard
R.A. SALVATORE

A new novel by The New York Times best-selling author

R.A. Salvatore

Look for *Servant of the Shard* at better book and hobby stores everywhere.

Wizards of the Coast®

All trademarks, including all character names and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards.

Lights, Camera, Dragons!

The Elwood Interview, Plus Casting Guide and Spoilers Galore

by Cory J. Herndon

The new D&D movie promises to start a new era of fantasy movies. Here's the scoop on the new film by one of DRAGON'S *crack reporters ... not that he reports on cracks, he's just really good, see?*

Lee Arenberg is not a dwarf to be trifled with. Nearly everyone has seen Arenberg act, even if they can't quite place his face. A veteran of dozens of films and numerous television shows, Arenberg's roles have won him notoriety on *Seinfeld,* all three "next gen" *Star Trek* series, and the critically acclaimed (and sorely missed) Fox series *Action* to name but a few. Between appearances at the D&D movie booth at this year's GEN CON, Lee was kind enough to take some time to speak with *DRAGON* about crossbeams, video games, and the "dwarf walk."

Lee Arenberg sums up his role in *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* in one sentence: "I'm a mercenary with no war to fight, in a society where dwarves are definitely second-class." The veteran character actor (and co-founder of the Actor's Gang theater in Los Angeles) is tall for a dwarf, and he'd be the first to admit it. "I'm 5 feet 4 inches, but I'm a solid 5 feet 4 inches. I was padded up and wearing chainmail, but to make up for my height, we actually created a kind of dwarf walk." Dwarf or no, Arenberg recognizes his character's place—and stature—in the D&D world. "I'm not a halfling, so I technically only had to lose a couple of inches."

The filmmakers also made use of angles and scene composition to give Elwood a more diminutive appearance. "By composing the frame a certain way, I seem shorter. Marlon's tall, but Justin's not really a big guy, and Kristin's not really tall either, just a few inches taller than me." When his fellow actors entered the frame, he would adjust. "It was on me to kind of get down low in the frame."

Arenberg is justifiably proud of his work in *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* and says he has "a vibe about this one." He expects that gamers and moviegoers alike will be surprised by the film, and he wants to get the word out. "The actors from this movie come to the cons because we know that the fans, the hardcore, are who we're counting on to help us open this movie big." To that end, Arenberg and his fellow cast members had been foregoing a standard convention practice. "We don't charge for our pictures—we say 'Go see the movie instead, and go on the first weekend. Pack the theaters.'"

Arenberg wants his hard work to pay off, if for no other reason than the abuse his body (and eyebrows) endured during filming. His role called for some of the heaviest makeup in the film. "I got the makeup down to about an hour, but over the week, the longest day would be the peroxide eyebrow day. It would make me look like kind of a freak-daddy for a while." The bleach was simply a component of the classic, red-bearded dwarven fighter, as it turned out. "They'd bleach my eyebrows, then lay the red hair on it with spirit gum, then the beard."

One of Arenberg's personal rules is to never claim to be a stuntman—"As soon as you say you're a stuntman, they'll drop you from 70 feet"—yet he was comfortable enough with an axe in his hand to do all of his own fighting in the film (with the exception of one cut scene). Still, at one point Arenberg

nearly took himself out of commission during what should have been a safe stunt. "The scene is at the end of a dead-end alley sequence. Damodar is chasing the heroes of the picture at this point. Snails and Ridley meet up with the Elwood character, and I help them get out of the situation."

To escape the commander of the Crimson Guard, the intrepid party dives into a smelly escape hatch. "They cut in as we dive into the sewer. I have my helmet in one hand, the battleaxe in the other, and I'm diving through the safety area, where the stuntman's waiting to pull me through." But peril awaited the brave dwarf. "So I'm moving it, moving fast, and I dive, and I slam right up into this crossbeam. There's no way it should've been there." At first, he thought he was fine. "Marlon's right behind me. He saw me in midair, and he's expecting to see me with a faceful of blood. He says 'Are you all right, man?' And I say, 'I'm cool,' and I sprang back up to my feet. And then I go, 'I'm not cool.' I turned into the evil dwarf. I was just mad at everyone. I was actually concussed, big time. I kind of lost feeling in my legs."

Perhaps more than any other actor in this movie, Arenberg considers himself an "avid gamer." His *Dreamcast* gets a lot of use, as do his golf clubs and laptop PC. "I'm a gamer, but I'm more of a video game dude." He's already preparing for the future. "I'm mostly playing games on *Dreamcast* right now, but I'm thinking *PlayStation 2* is the way to go."

As for paper gaming, Gen Con seems to have reawakened his childhood love of roleplaying. "When I was a kid growing up in Santa Monica, I did play D&D. But the Dungeon Master didn't seem to have my imagination half the time, so I got frustrated." He's impressed with the new edition of D&D, however. "I played in a 3rd Edition game with Dave Arneson and some of those guys, and I gotta tell you, it's a really fun experience for players. I had a great time. I was a gnome, kind of an illusionist. That was kind of cool."

Don't count on seeing him as a gnome illusionist at a gaming table soon, however. Left to his own devices, Arenberg has little doubt what kind of character he'd want to play. "I want to play me. When I was growing up, I never wanted to be the dwarf, but now I wouldn't want to be anything else."

CHARACTER SHEETS

Who's Who in the D&D Movie

[Thought you'd escaped the spoilers? Well, you mostly have, but in the spirit of things, we've dropped a few in here. We'll try to warn you ahead of time before giving away the part about Darth Vader being Luke's fath–d'oh!]

COURTNEY "COREY" SOLOMON (DIRECTOR)

Persistent Visionary with the Big Brass Ones

Few directorial debuts take quite as long to finish as Corey Solomon's. The thirty-year-old director of *Dungeons & Dragons* was only twenty-one when, after working all over Hollywood in various capacities, he ambitiously formed his own production company, Sweetpea Entertainment. He showed what might delicately be called the cajones of an ox when he decided to walk into TSR in 1991 and acquire the rights to the film. At first, he says, he was laughed out of the office. He persevered, however, and by 1994 he had the rights to the D&D movie franchise secured and the first draft of a script ready to go. As he continued to work on this picture, he got the backing of Hollywood action mogul Joel Silver, which no doubt helped sell the first-time director to investors.

Solomon has closely guarded the details of his story, although he has hinted that this would be the first film of a planned trilogy if it proves successful. At the time of this writing, though, he's no doubt happy to have found a distributor for his first movie (New Line, the folks who will soon be bringing you Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* films). Solomon also has the rights to the comic book *Gen13*.

RIDLEY (JUSTIN WHALIN)

Swashbuckling Rogue/Reluctant Hero

An orphan with no magical ability–two strikes against you on the streets of Sumdall–Ridley's a thief who's been forced to get by on his wits his entire life. If he can't get out of a situation with roguish charm, he'll show he knows how to handle a sword. He's scoping out the Sumdall School of Wizardry in part because he has no love for the ruling mage class and takes pleasure in causing them grief whenever he can. Ridley will be forced to put all of his considerable skills to the test in mano-a-mano combat against Damodar, and there might be more to this young man than is apparent to those who first meet him.

Justin Whalin [interviewed in *Dragon* #274] is probably best known to *Dragon* readers as Jimmy Olson on *Lois & Clark*. His first big break was on TV's *General Hospital*, which soon led to roles on the Scott Baio vehicle *Charles in Charge*. He won an Emmy for a 1994 CBS TV movie called *Other Mothers*, about a boy coming to grips with the fact that he has two moms and no dads.

Whalin has been with this picture longer than any other actor–he accepted the role of Ridley, which was practically written for him, in 1997. In the ensuing three years, the young actor became good friends with director Corey Solomon and turned down several work offers to keep his availability open. Solomon has said that without Whalin, the picture would never have been made.

"Strike down your Father and take his place ..." wait, wrong movie.

MOVIE MODULE

The Big Screen Storyline

[Note: The following contains spoilers for the plot and setup of the *Dungeons & Dragons* movie. Although we've tried not to give too much of the movie away, if you want to remain unspoiled, read no further. Especially don't read the last paragraph or two; there's really spoilery stuff in there, buddy. Go read the rest of the article again, instead.

By the way, this spoiler owes a lot to the good folks at **dndmovie.com.** ("We're not official—we just look like it!") Go check out the site; you'll be glad you did.]

Our story unfolds not in the Forgotten Realms, not in Greyhawk, nor on the Outer Planes. This tale takes place in the all-new world of Izmer, the movie's own campaign world. In Izmer, mages run the society, leaving all others as second-class citizens. The powerful Council of Mages operates behind the scenes while power ostensibly rests completely with the royal family in the capital city of Sumdall.

Profion (Jeremy Irons), one of the most powerful—and treacherous—mages in the land, is bent on creating a magical artifact that will allow him to control red dragons (ultimately, Profion wants to be the only one running things). As the story opens, he is putting the finishing touches on his own homemade *rod of dragon control.* Unfortunately for him (and for his test subject, a baby red dragon as big as a Buick), he hasn't gotten it quite right. He's forced to kill the infant dragon and must find a way to explain the incident.

Prepared to go back to the drawing board, Profion receives a message: The Emperor has died, leaving the royal court in turmoil. The crown—and the royal *rod of dragon control*—now falls to Empress Savina (Thora Birch), a young, untested woman with a noble moral bearing. Profion believes, however, that he can easily manipulate her, and seize control of the dragons and the kingdom. Only the evil mage and a few trusted servants know the truth: The king's death was no accident—Profion had him assassinated.

Savina surprises the Council of Mages. As soon as she ascends the throne, she begins to look for a way to address the basic injustice of Izmer's society: that power is held by a select few who show ability with magic, and all others serve this magical upper-class. Profion seizes on this debate to accuse the Empress of a number of crimes, not the least of which is manipulating her way onto the throne. The Council votes to strip her of her power and the royal *rod of dragon control.* Quickly, the city—and the entire kingdom—is split by civil war; the forces of the Empress on one side, Profion and the Council of Mages on the other.

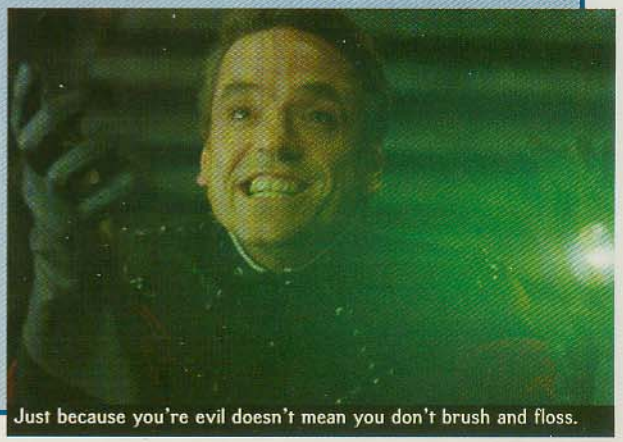
Fortunately for Savina, not all of the mages of Sumdall are evil. The sage of dracology, Vildan, is on her side. He tells her that a map inside the Sumdall School of Wizardry contains the location of the Rod of Savrille, the only other *rod of dragon control.* With this rod in her grasp, the Empress's control of the kingdom—and justice for the masses—would be secured. She dispatches Norda (Kristen Wilson), a half-elf who's served the royal family for centuries; and Marina (Zoe McLellan), Vildan's apprentice mage, into the school to retrieve the map.

Naturally, this doesn't escape the notice of Profion, who dispatches his accomplice, Damodar (Bruce Payne), head of the secret police, to retrieve the map. Unbeknownst to either side, however, another party has entered the picture. Damodar serves Profion, but one gets the feeling that should Profion ever secure power while Damodar lives, the mage might succumb to an "unfortunate accident rather quickly."

We meet two more of our heroes, Ridley (Justin Whalin), and his partner Snails (Marlon Wayans), as the two thieves (remember, this movie's based on 2nd Edition D&D) case the School for magic items that will fetch a high price on the black market. It would have gone just fine too, except that Norda's party and Damodar's arrive almost simultaneously.

It's soon obvious to Ridley and Snails which side they want to be on, and they make the moral decision between joining the big, evil, black-armored dude or the two pretty ladies. As Ridley, Snails, Marina, and Norda (a genuine party!) escape the School, the race for the Rod of Savrille is on!

The party expands by one when the ragtag group finds Elwood (Lee Arenberg)—a battered dwarven warrior with no war to fight—in a trash heap. Much like someone joining the weekly game after it's been going on for a while, the noble—if a bit tipsy—dwarf adds his axe to the search. Together, the five of them brave the Thieves' Maze, meet the King of the Elves (Tom Baker), and fight off Damodar on their quest for the rod. After much pain and hardship, a budding romance between Ridley and Marina, and at least one death (at last report), our heroes join the Empress—now adorned in ceremonial, but fully functional, golden armor and riding a huge dragon—as she leads



Just because you're evil doesn't mean you don't brush and floss.

an army of dragons against Profion in an enormous 12-minute effects bonanza. Hundreds of thousands of individually animated dragons will pummel the scales off of each other in a sequence so complex that no less than four special effects houses have been called in to work on it. This is but the backdrop to the climactic fighting between the main characters.

It's probably safe to say that good ultimately triumphs over evil in this, the first *Dungeons & Dragons* movie. The cast—well, most of the cast, in all likelihood—have signed up for at least two sequels, and director Corey Solomon has promised that there's a lot more to explore with the leading characters, especially Ridley. Perhaps this is but the first adventure in an ongoing cinematic campaign.

"If one more person calls me 'Natalie,' I'm going to cry."

EMPRESS SAVINA (THORA BIRCH)

The Teen Queen

The Empress starts out the film as the Princess, but Profion's treachery soon forces her into power at a young age. Princess Savina becomes Empress Savina early in the film, and her conflicts with the Council of Mages and Profion's schemes test the mettle of the girl-queen as her kingdom erupts into civil war. The Empress has few allies in Sumdall and relies on a few close advisors—such as the mage Vildan and the half-elf Norda—to make her stand. After enduring the machinations of Profion and the loss of her family, the girl will become the leader her kingdom needs. [spoiler ahead] By movie's end, she will enter combat herself and lead a draconic army against Profion. She has a Joan of Arc quality, if Joan of Arc had ridden a big dragon and stayed out of France—Savina is both the rallying flag and fearless leader of the good guys.

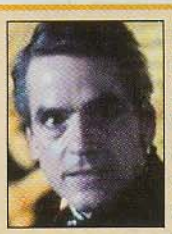
Thora Birch is instantly recognizable from a starmaking turn in last year's *American Beauty* as Kevin Spacey's and Annette Bening's frustrated daughter. She already had a successful child acting career under her belt when cast in *D&tD*, with television appearances ranging from the sitcom *Day by Day* to a telekinetic girl on *The Outer Limits* to a desperate teenager on *Touched By an Angel*. In addition to *American Beauty*, she appeared in two Jack Ryan movies (*Patriot Games* and *Clear and Present Danger*), the children's comedy *Monkey Trouble* (in which she ran afoul of Harvey Keitel), and shared the screen with another movie monarch—Natalie Portman—with a small, uncredited role in the film *Anywhere But Here*. Her upcoming projects include *The Smokers* with Dominique Swain (Jeremy Irons's co-star in the Showtime movie *Lolita*), the comic book film *Ghost World*, and the British horror flick *The Hole*, which should wrap soon.

SNAILS (MARLON WAYANS)

A Talented Thief with a Talent for Self-Preservation

Snails has been a thief at least as long, if not longer, than his partner Ridley. Like his friend, Snails has endured a rough life as a second-class citizen of Izmer. He boasts an uncanny survival instinct, knowing that ultimately his own life is his most valuable possession—a quality others might see as cowardice. Despite this, he has a courageous heart and stands with his comrades when the fighting gets serious. He's also a whiz with the old lockpick.

Marlon Wayans now has what many considered an unexpected hit under his belt since *Scary Movie* opened with record-setting box office receipts last summer. The youngest Wayans sibling (one half of the WB's *Wayans Brothers*) now has star power that can only help the notoriety of the *D&tD* film. Before *D&tD* opens, moviegoers can catch Marlon in October's *Requiem for a Dream*, and on the TV show he shares with his brother, Shawn.



PROFION (JEREMY IRONS)

The Perfect Villain

Odds are that the Sumdall dictionary has a picture of would-be conqueror Profion next to the word "Machiavellian." One of Sumdall's most powerful archmages, he's also a master manipulator, turning the Mage Council against the young queen and masterfully handling his agent—the ambitious Damodar, head of the kingdom's secret police. For much of the film, Profion controls the action from the political arena, but he enters the fray during the climactic battle. While it's certainly possible that he thinks he's doing what's best for Izmer, make no mistake about his obsession for power: Profion's certain that the entire kingdom would run much better with him in charge.

[Spoiler: Not only does this guy kill a baby dragon after a botched *rod of dragon control* experiment, he manages to have Savina's father assassinated and accuses her of treason!]

Few film actors are as respected as Jeremy Irons, and fewer still have had as varied and daring a career. He appeared in *David Cronenberg* twice, on *Dead Ringers* (in which he played twins), and in *M. Butterfly*. He won a Tony for his Broadway debut in *The Real Thing* with Glenn Close, and an Oscar for *Reversal of Fortune* (co-starring the same actress). He's also played many memorable villains in recent years, such as the ice-cold terrorist Simon Gruber in *Die Hard with a Vengeance* and the regicidal Scar in Disney's *The Lion King*. Irons currently spends much of his time supervising the renovation of his ancient Irish

castle, but he will return to the screen in earnest after *Dungeons & Dragons* with a remake of Tennessee Williams's *The Night of the Iguana* and the thriller *The Fourth Angel,* both due in 2001.

DAMODAR (BRUCE PAYNE)

A Hero Gone Bad—Really Bad

The Crimson Guard serves as an elite security force for the Council of Mages, and the Crimson Guard answers to Damodar. At one time, Damodar was a handsome, inspiring hero, until he got into a nasty scrap with a black dragon. Though he now wears the scales of that dragon as armor, he's been horribly scarred. What's worse, he enjoys the fear his appearance causes and has built the Crimson Guard into a personal hit squad. He's siding with Profion for practical reasons, although odds are he'd be happy to seize the reins of power should the mage drop them for even a moment.

[Spoiler: From the look of the online trailer, Damodar and Ridley have at least one wicked sword fight.]

The dashing (no really, you should see him with hair) Bruce Payne stars as another evil sword-swinging bastard in this year's *Highlander: Endgame.* Payne has appeared in many other fantasy/SF-genre films, such as *Warlock III, Necronomicon,* and even the oddity that was *Solarbabies.* Payne also has an extensive background on the BBC and got a chance to sink into the Mediterranean on the cable movie *Britannic.*

NORDA (KRISTEN WILSON)

Warrior, Guardian, and Enigma

The half-elf ranger Norda has protected and worked for the royal family of Izmer for generations. No one knows for certain (except perhaps Norda herself) how she came to serve the monarchy, but now her loyalty is unquestionable. She stands as one of the young ruler's true allies against the treachery of Profion and will defend the Empress with her own life if necessary.

After reading the *Dungeons & Dragons* script, Kristen Wilson reportedly walked into her audition—after booking a flight to Prague to track down the movie's director—and flatly told Corey Solomon, "I am Norda." While skeptical at first, Solomon and his cohorts completely agreed after seeing her read for the part. Wilson also appeared in two Spike Lee movies, *Girl 6* and *Get On the Bus;* as well as Eddie Murphy's remake of *Doctor Doolittle.* Since *D&D* wrapped, she's finished the independent feature *The Photographer* and, at this moment, is filming *Revelation in Jamaica.*

MARINA (ZOE MCLELLAN)

Not Just Another Mage in the Crowd

Marina, apprentice to the dracology scholar Vildan and trusted retainer to the Empress, joins Norda at her master's behest when it becomes apparent that the Rod of Savrille is in jeopardy. Marina is a capable mage, and in another realm might be considered well above-average. In Izmer, however, she's a 5th- or 6th-level wizard in a world run by 20th-level wizards. As part of the party of heroes in the D&D movie, however, Marina and her powers get the chance to shine.

[Spoiler: While at odds with Ridley when they first meet, the two soon fall in love.]

ELWOOD (LEE ARENBERG)

Fighter in Dire Need of a War ... and a Drink

The party stumbles upon Elwood the Dwarf—not his real name, but it's what most call him anyway—in a trash heap as they're running away from Damodar's minions. The besotted warrior, once an orc slayer of some renown, has been looking for a good scrap (and a way out of numerous bar tabs). His axe will come in handy on the journey to recover the Rod of Sevrille, and the red-bearded drunk quickly metamorphoses into the classic dwarven fighter.

Lee Arenberg ... well, Lee Arenberg is a very talented actor's actor. He's also interviewed elsewhere in this article.

"You say there are how many critters in my beard?"

YOU KNOW IT'S A D&D MOVIE WHEN ...

There are several special little elements that director Corey Solomon, himself a long-time D&D gamer, put into the film for RPG fans. Here are but a few ...

- Dave Arneson, co-creator of *Dungeons & Dragons,* has a small cameo in the film.
- Dragon types are clearly delineated by color (red, gold, and so on).
- Every character represents an iconic D&D class: the rogues pick locks and fight with speed and dexterity, the wizards hurl *fireballs* and *magic missiles,* the fighters swing battle-scarred melee weapons, and the rangers move through the forest like a fish through water.

WAIT, THIS IS A D&D MOVIE?

By the same token, a few things might seem odd at first to players used to Greyhawk and the Forgotten Realms. Think of Izmer as it's own world in the multiverse.

- Elves are big—really big! Tom Baker, clanmaster of the elves in the movie, stands 6 feet 4 inches tall!
- Thieves favor the longsword, not the rapier.
- The mages run things.
- There seems to be an alarming dearth of clerics. The mages probably don't want the competition.

REAPER MINIATURES ©™

Sculpted in 25mm Heroic Scale ©™

WE SWEAT THE DETAILS!

Please Visit These Fine Retailers To Find Our New Releases!

Wyvern Games LLC
698 Commerce Ct, Ste A
Prattville, AL. 36066
(334) 358-2422 Fax
AL (334) 358-2422

Michael's Magic
3617 E. Southern Ave #8
Meza, AZ 85206
www.MichaelsMagic.com
AZ (480) 325-7485

Adventurer's Guild of Riverside
3320 Mary Street
Riverside, CA 92506
(909) 682-0750 Fax
CA (909) 682-1199 Voice

Attactix
15107 E. Hampden
Aurora, CO 80014
www.attactix.com
CO (303) 699-3349

Cave Comics
57 Church Hill Road
Newtown, CT 06470
www.cavecomics.com
CT (203) 426-4346

Book and Game Emporium
311 NW Racetrack Rd.
Ft. Walton Beach, FL. 32547
FL. (850) 863-7964

War Dogs Game Center
2580 Atlantic Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32207
FL (904) 399-1975

The War Room
2055 F Beaver Run Rd
Norcross, GA 30093
www.thewarroom.com
GA (770) 729-9588

Acme Comics and Collectibles, Inc.
1788 Hamilton Blvd.
Sioux City, IA 51103
www.acmefirst.com
IA (712) 258-6171

Dragon's Sanctum
3213 23rd Avenue
Moline, IL 61265
IL (309) 762-5577
Fax (309) 762-8692

Galatic Games
516 N Main Street
Crown Point, IN 46307
www.gamesforthebrain.com
IN (219) 661-1939

Caught You Looking!
Your Store Here!
Lewisville, IN, 46311
reapermini.com
IN (972) 434-3088

Rusty Scabbard
820 Lane Allen Rd. # 12
Lexington, KY 40504
www.rustyscabbard.com
KY (606) 278-6634

Little Wars
3036 College Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
www.littlewars.com
LA (504) 926-4556

Grandmaster Games
31 Faunce Corner Road
Dartmouth, MA 02747
MA (508) 994-5474
heyou@grandmastergames.com

Changing Hands Book Shop
528 S. Virginia Ave
Joplin, MO. 64801
greyfox@ipa.net
MO (417) 623-6699

Hobby Shop
5840 Hampton
St. Louis, MO. 63109
MO (314) 351-4818

Jester's Playhouse
219 S. Main St # B
Cape May Crt Hse, NJ. 08210
www.jestersplayhouse.com
NJ (609) 463-8644

Jester's Playhouse
2408 New Road
Northfield, NJ 08225
www.jestersplayhouse.com
NJ (609) 677-9088

Gamers Realm
2025 Old Trenton Rd
West Windsor, NJ 08550
www.gamersrealm.com
NJ (609) 426-9339

Fantastic Planet
24 Oak St
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
NY (518) 563-2946

Wolf's Lair Games
33 E High St
Springfield, OH 45502
www.wolfslairgames.com
OH (888) 333-WOLF

The Original Game Shop
6524 E 51st St
In the Farm
Tulsa, OK 74145
OK (888) 525-8647

Texas Game Company
803 E Main Street
Allen, TX 75002
TX (972) 390-9467

Lone Star Comics
504 E Abram
Arlington, TX 76010
www.mycomicshop.com
TX (817) 860-STAR

King's Hobby
8810 N Lamar
Austin, TX 78753
www.kingshobby.com
TX (512) 836-7388

Dragons Lair Comics
4910 Burnett Road
Austin, TX 78756
TX (512) 454-2399

Fantasy and Sci-Fi Games
2220 Marsh Lane # 107
Carrollton, TX 75006
TX (972) 418-5409

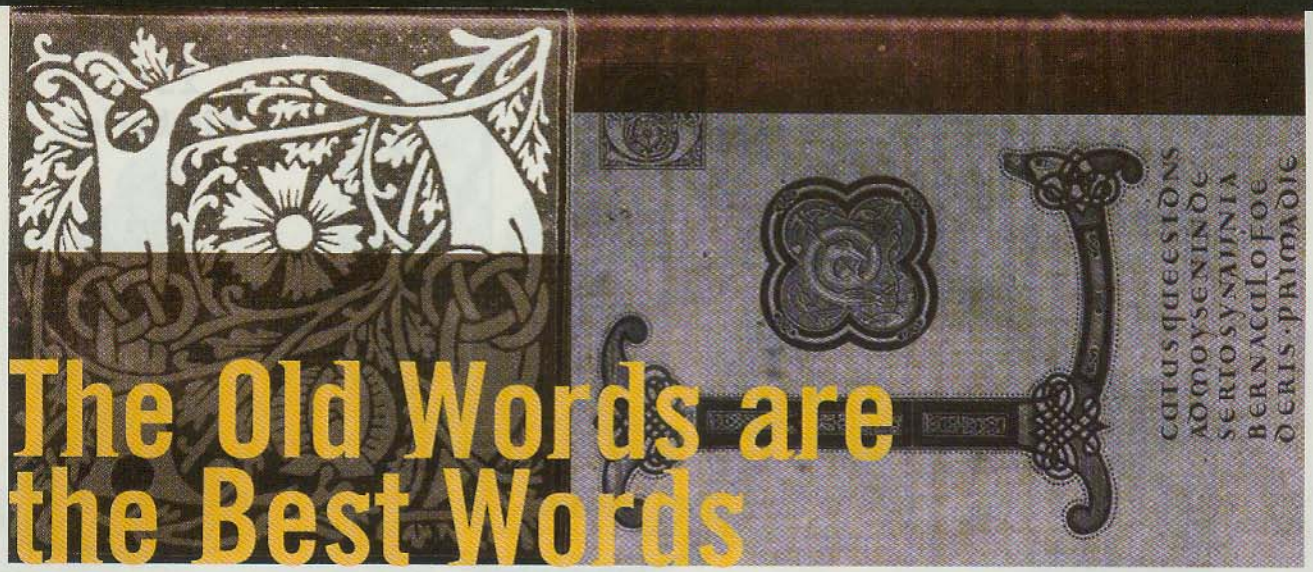
Dibble's Hobbies
1029 Donaldson Ave
San Antonio, TX 78228
dibbles@satx.net
TX (210) 735-7721

Little Wars
11213 K Lee Hwy
Fairfax, VA 22030
fabet@aol.com
VA (703) 352-9222

Roanoke Hobbies
5942 Hollins
Roanoke, VA. 24019
VA (540) 777-4856

Le Valet D'Coeur
4408 St-Denis
Montreal, Quebec, CAN
H2J 2L1
www.levalet.com
CAN (888) 499-5389

FOR A FREE CATALOG CALL (972) 434-3088 - WWW.REAPERMINI.COM



The Old Words are the Best Words

Nine Dwarven Proverbs and How To Use Them

by Robin D. Laws

Duke Vajdai looked down past the edge of the crumbling precipice then back at the horde of Sanceri horsemen who whooped and hollered at them, scimitars held aloft. He turned to the dwarven warrior who stood at his side. Boradir looked stolidly at their oncoming foes, legs braced, his hefty axe held firmly in his gnarled fist.

"Well, what now, Boradir?" said the Duke, hoping that his voice would not betray his fear. He had fought beside Boradir for a dozen years, but still had no idea whether the dwarf liked or even respected him.

"He who fears death invites it to visit," Boradir said, evenly.

"You try my patience, Boradir! This is not the time for another of your incomprehensible proverbs!" Vajdai braced himself; the first Sanceri would soon be upon them.

"There is no better time, youngling. The old words are the best words."

Dwarves believe heartily in the wisdom of the ages. They know that there is nothing new under the earth and that their ancestors faced all of the same struggles, doubts, and questions they confront in their own lives. To prepare for their future, they look to the past. Dwarves record it in a variety of ways. Their historical tomes are as famous for their exhaustive attention to detail as they are for their back-breaking heft. Their tapestries, colors still brilliant after thousands of years, depict the exemplary actions of clan founders and heroes. Long before they learn enough to appreciate such lofty expressions, young dwarves absorb a hundred lifetimes worth of common sense and homespun wisdom as they listen to their grandmothers and grandfathers, hearing old proverbs mulled and repeated. Distilled in these old sayings are thousands of years of dwarven experience, both bitter and joyous. Sometimes poetic, at other times cynical, but always pithy, these are the words that first come to mind when any dwarf confronts a problem, whether trivial or death-defying.

To a dwarf, these sayings provide comfort when trouble comes knocking. It is always good to know that others have weathered the same kinds of crises and come out the wiser for it. The old proverbs remind a dwarf of who she is and of the traditions she must uphold if she is to live up to the expectations of her clan.

Members of other races can be forgiven for finding the dwarven love of proverbs a bit trying at times. The sayings don't always make sense on first hearing. People who didn't grow up listening to the old sayings find them confusing, not reassuring, when uttered in the face of danger. Humans, whose enthusiasm for the ancient past is sometimes less than fervent, might laugh at the dwarven love of platitudes. They see it as a sign of hidebound and unoriginal thinking. Elves, who perceive the world in mystical terms, find dwarven dictums leaden and literal minded.

However, non-dwarves who want to deal favorably with the sons and daughters of Moradin could do worse than to learn how and when to use a few of the old adages.

Here are some of the best-known dwarf sayings. The **Simple Meaning** entry shows you how a dwarf might briefly explain the maxim to a puzzled outsider. (She'll probably do so with greater impatience than the entries suggest.) The **Deeper Meaning** provides the more detailed analysis that a dwarf would be too tight-lipped and practical to delve into. **When To Say It** gives you example circumstances in which your dwarven PC might use the phrase. **How To Use It** presents guidelines on using the saying, or the principles behind it, when negotiating with dwarven NPCs.

"AFTER A PHILOSOPHER SHAKES YOUR HAND, COUNT YOUR FINGERS."

Simple Meaning: Never trust fancy talkers.

Deeper Meaning: Dwarves place their trust in practical things. Although you can't get along without words, the ones you choose should be simple, straightforward, and ring with obvious truth—just like these proverbs. When a person speaks mostly of ideas—and does it in complicated, convoluted language—you can be sure that he's either a fool or a scoundrel. Either way, he's dangerous and likely to get you into trouble if you follow his advice.

Every so often someone comes along in dwarven history and tries to change things. His ideas for change seem practical and sound at first, but as sensible people find their flaws and speak out against them, the philosopher draws his more fanatical followers around him and then the trouble really starts. The philosophy becomes wilder and more radical. Often these people just exile themselves from proper society and are soon forgotten, but sometimes they become violent and fighting breaks out between the radicals and the defenders of traditional ways. People are killed and property destroyed, all for a lot of abstract ideas. Sometimes the leaders really mean what they say. In other cases, they're self-seeking, lazy fellows who attract followers only to fleece them of their hard-won gold, living a life of luxury at the expense of their dupes. Either way, dwarves who enter into dealings with these people almost always come to grief.

Certain other races show a great tolerance for philosophy, which is one of the reasons dwarves don't trust them. Humans, whose lives are brief and filled with ferment, are proud and often think that they can change the world with a new doctrine or set of rules for living. They are especially dangerous. Elves talk all kinds of airy nonsense but are wary of changing their own traditions, so they are merely vexing.

When To Say It: When a big talker has just left the room. In rebuttal to someone who uses intellectual argument to try to convince you to do something foolish.

How To Use It: Use this adage to show a dwarf that you're the sort of down-to-earth person she can rely on. Or simply keep it in mind when you speak with dwarves, avoiding the kind of abstract reasoning that might make them say it behind your back when you depart.

"IT WOULD BE WORTH A YEAR OF VENGEANCE."

Simple Meaning: Some offenses are too great to bear. They make any self-respecting dwarf reach for his axe and swear deadly vengeance. When you make an oath of vengeance, you must be ready to devote all of your time and passion to it until your foe lies at your feet, broken and bloodied. It is not unknown for an avenger to spend all of his effort for a whole year, or even longer, to accomplish this feat.

Deeper Meaning: This proverb reminds dwarves, who are often tempted to vengeance, of the dual role it plays in their society. The pursuit of vengeance is seen as necessary and noble in extreme circumstances. However, it is more a thing for sagas and chronicles than for everyday life. Vows of vengeance are not to be taken casually. The violence they bring often escalates, enveloping entire clans or even communities in a cycle of strikes and counterstrikes. The avenger might lose not only his own life but also those of his friends and family. A dwarf who has something to lose must therefore think hard and long before swearing vengeance. If you take the axe-oath, you must concern yourself only with your quest for deadly satisfaction. To declare the oath and fail to pursue it is to bring shame to your name, which belongs not to you, but to your revered ancestors.

When To Say It: This saying is not to be spoken idly nor in jest. Utter it only to warn someone from a course of action that would obligate you to pursue terrible vengeance against him.

How To Use It: Unless your dwarf companions consider you an adopted member of their society, don't even think about saying this. You will either offend them beyond measure or lead them to permanently label you an irredeemable half-wit. Tread carefully around the entire subject.

Dwarven PCs

If you're playing a dwarven PC, you can use these maxims when speaking in character. Feel free to copy the sayings onto index cards to serve as handy reminders during play. Your cache of proverbs might form the basis of some good old-fashioned comic repartee with the other PCs. They might churlishly complain that your epigrams are old and foolish, but you can gruffly respond that they wouldn't know wisdom if it bit them on the ankle and that your grandmother could drink theirs under the table any day. Alternate these rejoinders with similar examples of blunt dwarven wit. It goes without saying that when one of your proverbs actually helps to solve a problem, you should spend at least the rest of the session loudly proclaiming your vindication and otherwise rubbing it in.

In short, have fun hauling these sayings out for any remotely applicable situation—but pay attention to the reactions of the rest of the group. Make sure that you're not crossing the line between comically annoying and annoyingly annoying.

"HE WHO FEARS DEATH INVITES IT TO VISIT."

Simple Meaning: It's foolish to worry too much about getting killed. The worry will likely do you more harm than what you're worried about.

Deeper Meaning: Dwarves are noted not just for their exploits on the battlefield but also for the hard-headed, sensible way in which they tackle the problems of war. Their weapons masters train young fighters not only in the blade and hammer but also in the proper mental attitude for combat. A real dwarven warrior remains cool and confident in the face of danger. If he lets his natural fear of death or injury set his weapon-hand to trembling or send him fleeing from the battlefield, he's likely to get himself killed.

When To Say It: When facing a tough fight, reassuring a fearful comrade, or taking a necessary risk.

How To Use It: Although dwarves see themselves as fearless, their reverence for the way things have always been done sometimes makes them reluctant to take risks. If you're negotiating with a dwarf who tells you that something can't be done, you can use this saying to remind him that he should set aside his fears to look coolly at the situation. Before using this proverb, make sure that you're not asking the dwarf to take a genuinely foolish risk.

Dealing With Dwarven NPCs

If your PC is not a dwarf, you can still make use of this article. Dwarves are suspicious of outsiders. Even other dwarves are welcomed with squinty-eyed distrust if they hail from unknown or faraway clans. Short-lived races are at a special disadvantage when interacting with dwarves; the length of time that a dwarf must know someone before he fully trusts him is far longer than the average human lifespan! Even if your family has dealt with dwarves for many generations, you might find yourself judged on the past social gaffes of your grandfather or even your great-grandfather.

The strategic use of dwarven epigrams can cut through this instinctive suspicion, surprising your negotiating partner with your knowledge and respect of the ancient wisdom of his people. This gives you a brief window of time in which you can impress him as an individual and not just another know-nothing outsider. Naturally, you have to know what the saying means and use it well. It is better to say nothing than to misuse an adage.

If, when dealing with dwarves, you use one of these proverbs in an appropriate way, your DM might give you bonuses on Diplomacy or Gather Information skill checks. He might also reward you for improvising a plausible dwarven aphorism. In this case, you as a player have created a new saying, but the character is simply remembering a well-known, preexisting dwarven maxim.

Blatantly disrespectful uses of dwarven platitudes might net you a penalty to the same skill checks.

"MAY THE VOICES OF YOUR NAMESAKES ECHO IN YOUR CRY."

Simple Meaning: This is how dwarves wish one another luck in battle.

Deeper Meaning: Dwarves are named after illustrious ancestors. They are constantly reminded that they only borrow these names from their clan and from the namesakes who went before them. A worthy dwarf aspires to add glory to the name before he dies. An unworthy one commits acts that bring shame to the name.

Although there are many ways to win glory, the most dramatic and riskiest is in battle. Some dwarves believe that their namesakes watch over them during these defining moments. Others say this is a poetic truth, not a literal one. Every fighting dwarf has a distinctive battle cry he utters as he charges his foes. It is considered auspicious to hear in this cry not only one's own voice but also those of one's namesakes. When this happens, a good result is almost certain: You will either win the battle or die in a glorious manner that brings further luster to your name.

To wish this on a comrade is not only to bid her good luck but to help steel her determination by reminding her of her life's true purpose.

When To Say It: Before battle.

How To Use It: Say this to your dwarven comrades only before truly significant fights. A combat unlikely to make its way into a dwarven historical chronicle does not merit such solemnity.

If your dwarf friend is an exile from her homeland or has otherwise shamed her name, this is a very bad thing to say. By reminding her of her failure as a dwarf, you might demoralize her and make her yearn for death.

"THE LAW IS OLDER THAN YOUR BLADE."

Simple Meaning: The great dwarves of the past made laws so that their descendants wouldn't have to solve problems through violence.

Deeper Meaning: Dwarves have a strong sense of justice. They respect the law because it has stood the test of time. Every young dwarf learns the story of how his community's laws were made. The details of the tale vary from place to place, but the lesson is always the same: Laws protect communities from the tragic consequences of feuding. Although it is hard to trust the law when you are the injured party, it is important to try. Although individual cases sometimes go awry with seemingly unfair results, it is vital to remember that even more people would suffer if everyone went back to the old ways.

When To Say It: When staying a hothead's hand as he reaches for the hilt of his weapon. When arguing that a matter should be left in the hands of local authorities instead of being resolved by armed adventurers.

How To Use It: Dwarves sometimes say words they can't take back, swearing vengeance in the heat of the moment. They'll thank you if you use this phrase before they go too far. It reminds them to cool down and consider the consequences of a rash vow.

"SPILLED WATER FLEES FAST."

Simple Meaning: When you spill water on the ground, it goes all over the place. It runs off or seeps into the ground. Either way, you'll never get that water back again. The same is true of money if you dispense it carelessly.

Deeper Meaning: Other races might value generosity, but dwarves associate the trait with foolishness. If you work hard for something, especially if you risk your health or property to get it, you shouldn't fritter it away. To do so shows disrespect for your own sweat and time. You should share your earnings with your clan, of course. But presumably, you live in a clan that is reliable as gold, in which everyone does his share. There are plenty of outsiders who want to part you from your gold. By giving it to them, you are depriving the members of your own clan, who have a higher claim to it.

When To Say It: When pumped for a hand-out by charities, tax collectors, or other such beggars. When others mock you for sending your treasure home to your clan instead of spending it on expensive gear or magic items. When asked to contribute more than your share of wealth to a frivolous pet project of your adventuring party, such as the resurrection of a comrade. The saying is especially appropriate when the proposal is made on the dubious grounds that you have more gold than everyone else and should therefore be readier to part with it.

Most dwarves who spend the majority of their time in an adventuring party made up of outlanders gradually come to adopt their spendthrift ways, at least grudgingly. It is not recommended that dwarven PCs actually withhold money needed to pay for resurrections and other genuinely useful things—just that they take full advantage of the opportunity to grump about it for a long time afterward.

How To Use It: If your negotiating partner wants you to give him better terms than you can afford, use of this epigram tells him that you're not being miserly but are simply concerned for the welfare of your family or clan. Or rather that you are being miserly, but in an admirable way.

"THE SOBER GUEST OUTSTAYS HIS WELCOME."

Simple Meaning: Never trust a person who doesn't drink. A man who holds back while you are indulging doubtless hopes to take advantage of you. He probably means to steal your purse. He might even try to kill you while your guard is down.

Deeper Meaning: Dwarves are proud and dedicated imbibers of ale. It is around the drinking table that they drop their gruff reserve and allow themselves to show friendship, happiness, and bravado. They give themselves permission to say things to one another that would cause offense if uttered at dinner or across a bargaining table. With flagons of ale in hand, dwarves needn't worry about embarrassing themselves among their peers: What is said will be both forgiven and forgotten. However, an individual who chooses not to drink breaks this bubble of mutual agreement. Others around him must worry that he'll remember any unseemly outbursts they make, and perhaps repeat them to others. Even worse, unseemly sobriety sometimes masks treacherous intent. What dread secrets is he afraid he'll reveal?

Dwarves do not casually invite others into their homes. To do so is to acknowledge a profound obligation to support and protect one another. A house guest who refuses your ale has rejected your offer of friendship. To be rebuffed in this way by a guest is to suffer a humiliation worse than a slap in the face.

This saying is well-known outside dwarven circles. People who don't know dwarves very well think it means that they require their house guests to get sloshed and smash their furniture. Nothing could be further from the truth.

When To Say It: When noticing that someone doesn't drink or takes suspiciously small sips from his flagon.

How To Use It: When drinking with dwarves, you must carefully pace your intake. If you drink too little, they'll distrust you. Their capacity for ale is greater than that of other races, so if you try to keep up with them you'll rue your overindulgence. Drink just enough to loosen your tongue a little, but not so much that you have trouble walking or keeping your head up.

"YOU DON'T FIND GOLD BY LICKING THE ROCK."

Simple Meaning: First impressions are unreliable. It takes time and effort to gain a true understanding of anything that really matters.

Deeper Meaning: On the surface, this is one of a thousand dwarven epigrams extolling hard work, but it is more importantly a statement about fair-mindedness. One of the things that takes time and effort to understand is the worthiness of an individual's character. Just as a miner can't assume that an area is devoid of gold just because its surface rock reminds him of poor places he's dug in the past, a dwarf can't rely on prejudices when meeting new people. A scruffy-looking fellow might own a hoard of gold. A man with brutish features could be wise and just.

When To Say It: In response to another's hasty judgment. As an argument for a more thorough search or investigation. As a reproach to the lazy.

How To Use It: When your dwarven allies are overcome by their judgmental tendencies.

"GOLD DOESN'T BURN."

Simple Meaning: Gold is the only reliable form of wealth. Most other things can be easily destroyed or fluctuate in value.

Deeper Meaning: The dwarven love of gold is sometimes seen as greed, but it is simply a matter of practicality. Dwarves feel that forms of wealth, just like people, must prove themselves trustworthy over time, and nothing is more trustworthy than gold. It comes from the earth, which dwarves understand. It remains reliably rare. Its purity is easy to measure. The value of gems, for example, is a matter of subjective appraisal.

This saying also applies to people. An individual who has proven the depth and reliability of his character won't let you down. The same is true of a clan that has shown its honor and trustworthiness over generations. A good dwarf should behave not only well but consistently. When you tell a dwarf that he has a heart of gold, it is a mighty compliment. You are telling him not that he is generous but that he is reliable and can be depended upon to react predictably in an emergency.

(It's not always a compliment to tell a dwarf he's generous, as described in the "Spilled Water Flees Fast" entry.)

When To Say It: When asked what form you would like your payment to take. When praising the character of a trustworthy dwarf or clan. In rare cases, in praise of a non-dwarf.

How To Use It: This saying never goes awry when your negotiations with a dwarf involve offering him gold. Non-dwarves should be very careful in using it in its other sense, though. To apply it as a compliment to someone you haven't known for hundreds of years is seen as the height of presumption.

Other Proverbs

This article picks out a few sayings that underline important elements of dwarven thought and are also fairly easy to understand. They represent just a tiny fraction of dwarven aphorisms. Compendiums of proverbs by dwarven scholars feature thousands of entries, each written in tiny script, and none of these volumes claim to be complete. Many proverbs seem cryptic to outsiders, or refer to obscure aspects of dwarven society. The following list of proverbs, provided without further explanation, gives you a sense of their flavor:

"Better wrong with your clan than right with strangers."
"Grief never killed a spider."
"Ink is memory's champion, the pen its spear."
"Lances are made for giants' navels."
"Open-eyed sleep is the gift of rats and warriors."
"Regrets dwell in a candle's flicker."
"Gold earned easy should be spent quick, ere it spends you."
"The dark is too honest for a guilty man."
"Saunterers and foot-draggers end up walking on their knees."
"The gods use us as weapons when they decide to slay."
"Those who speak their minds often, often find there is little in them."
"Victors stride ever forward."
"Youth dreams of age as crows covet carrion."

CLASS COMBOS 2:

DWARVES

by James Wyatt

Tarakh listened as the sounds of battle drew nearer, then saw the first ranks of the goblin army—battered but still advancing—come into view. He smiled grimly to himself as he hefted his waraxe and assumed his stance. No goblin would get past him to defile Moradin's sacred halls.

Then, without warning, the goblins were routed. The slayers and stonelings had done their job, using their unique talents to ambush the goblin leaders. Tarakh watched the leaderless goblins flee before a detachment of dwarves, their axes ablaze with enchanted fire. He recognized the blue flame of Kiera's blade and smiled again as the artificer cut a swath through the terrified goblins. Her time spent studying magic had certainly not diminished her prowess on the field.

The "Class Combos" article in *Dragon* Annual #5 described seven "iconic multiclasses"—multiclass character types that can be viewed like distinct classes. Those seven multiclasses—the champion (cleric/fighter), nature's champion (druid/ranger), scout (ranger/rogue), skald (barbarian/bard), spellfilcher (rogue/wizard or sorcerer), spellsword (fighter/wizard or sorcerer), and tracker (barbarian/ranger)—are generic enough to play a variety of roles in the campaign and be adopted by characters of a variety of races.

Among the dwarves, however, strong traditions have developed of multiclasses particular to the dwarven race and culture. These iconic dwarven multiclasses include the artificer (fighter/wizard), the slayer (fighter/rogue), the stoneling

ARTIFICER

The artificer (fighter/wizard) is a warrior-smith who uses his magic to enhance his own fighting ability and that of his companions. Some artificers specialize in crafting magic weapons and armor to use them in battle, while others make wands so they can cast spells while wearing heavy armor. Most artificers cast their spells before melee begins, then strap on their enchanted full plate, heft their magic dwarven waraxes, and wade into the fray.

Unlike the "spellsword" fighter/wizard described in Annual #5 artificers advance as many fighter levels as wizard levels. The extra emphasis on fighting ability makes artificers better in combat while still allowing them to craft magic arms and armor with higher enhancement bonuses or enchant wands with more powerful spells.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class wizard)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Fighter weapon and armor proficiency
- Bonus fighter feats
- Weapon specialization access

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class wizard)
- Slower access to spell levels, maximum 5th-level spells
- Weaker Will saves

SLAYER

Slayers are dwarven fighter/rogues who specialize in dirty combat, typically working in teams of two. They combine a fighter's weapon proficiency and combat training with a rogue's sneak attack and evasion to maximize the havoc they can wreak among their foes. Few dwarven rulers will admit to using slayers, but even fewer could get by without them. Whether facing invading goblins or weeding out an internal threat, slayers are an invaluable combat force in any community of dwarves.

An even level progression makes good sense for slayers: The more fighter levels they advance, the more feats and hit points they gain, and each rogue level brings them closer to increased sneak attack damage. If a slayer varies from this strict progression, it is usually in favor of more fighter levels.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class rogue)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Fighter weapon and armor proficiency
- Bonus fighter feats
- Weapon specialization access

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class rogue)
- Fewer skill points
- Weaker Reflex save
- Less access to rogue class abilities

(cleric/rogue), and the temple defender (cleric/fighter/dwarven defender).

As in "Class Combos," each dwarven multiclass has a suggested level progression. In this case, rather than maximizing the benefits from each class, the progressions contribute to the flavor and function of the multiclass. As before, however, the level progressions offered are suggestions only—although in the case of the stoneling a dwarf could face an XP penalty if he chooses to deviate from the path presented.

MULTICLASS CHARACTERS AND PRESTIGE CLASSES

Multiclassing is not necessarily the way to go if you're preparing for a prestige class. The arcane archer is the only prestige class in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* that a multiclass character (a 6th-level fighter/1st-level wizard, for example) can qualify for earlier than any single-class character. However, a multiclass character often brings more flavor to a prestige class, as in the case of the temple defender. While a single-class fighter could have qualified earlier for the dwarven defender prestige class, the multiclass fighter/cleric puts a religious spin on the defender and supplements the defender's amazing combat skills with a good selection of cleric spells.

Rogue/wizards could make great assassins, cleric/fighters would be excellent blackguards, cleric/wizards or multiclass bards would make interesting loremasters, and a monk/sorcerer might just be the coolest shadowdancer around. While a multiclass character can sometimes be in danger of losing focus, the prestige class really helps to define what the character is all about.

CHARACTER CHOICES

Fortunately for artificers, the one class skill that fighters and wizards have in common is one that they want to be good at: Craft (armorsmithing, weaponsmithing, and so on). Artificers can keep Craft at their maximum ranks as they advance in level, then maintain essential wizard class skills like Concentration and Spellcraft by devoting the rest of their wizard skill points and most (if not all) of their fighter skill points to them as well.

Artificers concentrate on feats that maximize their combat potential. In addition to item creation feats (planning their level progression in order to get Craft Magic Arms and Armor or Craft Wand as early as possible in their careers), they often take Still Spell so they can cast spells while in armor with no fear of spell failure. They display no clear preferences of fighter bonus feats.

Artificers prefer spells they can cast before battle to enhance their melee effectiveness. These include ability enhancers (*bull's strength, cat's grace, endurance*), weapon enhancers (*magic weapon, greater magic weapon, keen edge*), defensive wards (*endure elements, resist elements, protection from elements, stoneskin*), and Evocation spells they can put into wands (*magic missile, fireball, lightning bolt, ice storm*).

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Ftr1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Bonus fighter feat, feat, martial weapon proficiency
2	Ftr1/Wiz1	+1	+2	+0	+2	12	0 and 1st-level spells, familiar, Scribe Scroll
3	Ftr1/Wiz2	+2	+2	+0	+3	14	Feat
4	Ftr1/Wiz3	+2	+3	+1	+3	16	2nd-level spells, ability increase
5	Ftr1/Wiz4	+3	+3	+1	+4	18	
6	Ftr1/Wiz5	+3	+3	+1	+4	20	3rd-level spells, bonus wizard feat (Craft Magic Arms and Armor or Craft Wand), feat
7	Ftr2/Wiz5	+4	+4	+1	+4	25	Bonus fighter feat
8	Ftr3/Wiz5	+5	+4	+2	+5	30	Ability increase
9	Ftr4/Wiz5	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	35	Bonus fighter feat, feat
10	Ftr5/Wiz5	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	40	
11	Ftr6/Wiz5	+8/+3	+6	+3	+6	45	Bonus fighter feat
12	Ftr6/Wiz6	+9/+4	+7	+4	+7	47	Ability increase, feat
13	Ftr7/Wiz6	+10/+5	+7	+4	+7	52	
14	Ftr7/Wiz7	+10/+5	+7	+4	+7	54	4th-level spells
15	Ftr8/Wiz7	+11/+6/+1	+8	+4	+7	59	Bonus fighter feat
16	Ftr8/Wiz8	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+8	61	Bonus fighter feat, feat
17	Ftr9/Wiz8	+13/+8/+3	+8	+5	+9	66	
18	Ftr9/Wiz9	+13/+8/+3	+9	+6	+9	68	5th-level spells, feat
19	Ftr10/Wiz9	+14/+9/+4	+10	+6	+9	73	Bonus fighter feat
20	Ftr10/Wiz10	+15/+10/+5	+10	+6	+10	75	Ability increase, feat

CHARACTER CHOICES

If a fighter/rogue is interested in rogue skills, he usually starts his career as a 1st-level rogue. Not the slayer. Hit points, Fortitude saves, weapons, armor, and feats—especially hit points—lead slayers to start off as fighters. Skills are used when the sword fails. That said, slayers make good use of the skill points they collect from their rogue levels. Tumble is a favorite, as it helps them get into position to flank opponents. Climb and Jump are good skills to bump up with new fighter levels, while Hide and Move Silently have their uses. Few slayers care much for the subtler rogue skills, like Bluff, Open Lock, or Pick Pocket.

Slayers love feats. Blind-Fight, Weapon Focus, Point Blank Shot, and the track that leads to Whirlwind Attack (Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack) are favorite choices. No slayer of 8th level or above would be caught dead without Weapon Specialization.

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Ftr1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Bonus fighter feat, feat, martial weapon proficiency
2	Ftr1/Rog1	+1	+2	+2	+0	13	Sneak attack +1d6
3	Ftr1/Rog2	+2	+2	+3	+0	16	Evasion, feat
4	Ftr2/Rog2	+3	+3	+3	+0	21	Ability increase, bonus fighter feat
5	Ftr2/Rog3	+4	+4	+3	+1	24	Sneak attack +2d6, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus)
6	Ftr3/Rog3	+5	+4	+4	+2	29	Feat
7	Ftr3/Rog4	+6/+1	+4	+5	+2	32	
8	Ftr4/Rog4	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	37	Ability increase, bonus fighter feat
9	Ftr4/Rog5	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	40	Feat, sneak attack +3d6
10	Ftr5/Rog5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+2	45	
11	Ftr5/Rog6	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	48	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
12	Ftr6/Rog6	+10/+5	+7	+7	+4	53	Ability increase, bonus fighter feat, feat
13	Ftr6/Rog7	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+4	56	Sneak attack +4d6
14	Ftr7/Rog7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+4	61	
15	Ftr7/Rog8	+13/+8/+3	+7	+8	+4	64	Feat
16	Ftr8/Rog8	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+4	69	Ability increase, bonus fighter feat
17	Ftr8/Rog9	+14/+9/+4	+9	+8	+5	72	Sneak attack +5d6
18	Ftr9/Rog9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+6	77	Feat
19	Ftr9/Rog10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+9	+10	+6	80	Rogue special ability
20	Ftr10/Rog10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+6	85	Ability increase, bonus fighter feat

TODD LOCKWOOD

STONELING

Stonelings are an obscure sect of dwarf cleric/rogues who believe that dwarves are literally formed of rock. They teach methods to harness the power of the stone within. The hardness of marble, the cutting edge of obsidian, and the fury of a volcano are all part of a stoneling's ideals. Stonelings begin their training with combat and magical basics, from sneak attacks (which they poetically call "stone smites the softness") and *magic stone* ("fury of stone") to evasion ("a rolling stone") and *bull's strength* ("the strength of stone"). At higher levels, stonelings can *meld into stone* to sneak attack their foes, and the culmination of a stoneling's power is to harden the flesh with *stoneskin*.

Because dwarves' favored class is fighter, stonelings must advance cleric and rogue levels evenly or face an XP penalty. Thus, their spell progression is slower than it might be (compared to that of the spellfilcher from "Class Combos"), but their sneak attack damage also increases steadily, and their saving throws are good in all three categories.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class rogue)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better Fortitude and Will saves
- Medium and heavy armor proficiency

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class rogue)
- Less access to rogue class abilities

TEMPLE DEFENDER

The temple defender is not an independent prestige class. Rather, it represents a specific approach to qualifying for the dwarven defender prestige class. Temple defender is often chosen by those with a specifically religious calling to the position of defender. Beginning their careers as multiclass fighter/clerics, temple defenders train in dwarven temples, where they learn religion, divine spellcasting, and combat techniques. They qualify to become dwarven defenders at 10th level and swear to give their lives in defense of their faith.

Temple defenders increase their cleric levels early, maximizing their spell progression at low levels. This way, they can cast 3rd-level spells by the time they begin the dwarven defender prestige class, and they suffer no XP penalties as multiclass fighter/clerics.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class cleric)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude and Will saves
- Fighter weapon and armor proficiency
- Bonus fighter feats
- Weapon specialization access
- Dwarven defender abilities

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class cleric)
- Slower access to spell levels, maximum 3rd-level spells
- Weaker turning ability

CHARACTER CHOICES

Like slayers, stonelings are trained in combat rather than stealth. They use their rogue skill points on skills like Climb, Jump, Spot, and Tumble, rather than Hide or Move Silently. They tend to pour their cleric skill points into Knowledge (religion) and Concentration. They treat stone with a religious reverence and tend to have skills like Appraise, Craft (stonecarving), Profession (miner), and Profession (stonemason).

Stonelings like feats such as Power Attack ("lava's force"), and have a quirky propensity toward Endurance ("stone tires not") and Toughness ("breaking the blade"). They also enjoy item creation feats, which they use to create sacred items out of stone, primarily wondrous items. With their slow spell progression, they are not inclined toward metamagic feats.

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Clr1	+0	+2	+0	+2	8	0- and 1st-level spells, feat, turning
2	Clr1/Rog1	+0	+2	+2	+2	11	Sneak attack +1d6
3	Clr2/Rog1	+1	+3	+2	+3	15	Feat
4	Clr2/Rog2	+2	+3	+3	+3	18	Ability increase, evasion
5	Clr3/Rog2	+3	+3	+4	+3	22	2nd-level spells
6	Clr3/Rog3	+4	+4	+4	+4	25	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus), sneak attack +2d6, feat
7	Clr4/Rog3	+5	+5	+4	+5	29	
8	Clr4/Rog4	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	32	Ability increase
9	Clr5/Rog4	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	36	3rd-level spells, feat
10	Clr5/Rog5	+6/+1	+5	+5	+5	39	Sneak attack +3d6
11	Clr6/Rog5	+7/+2	+6	+6	+6	43	
12	Clr6/Rog6	+8/+3	+7	+7	+7	46	Ability increase, feat, uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
13	Clr7/Rog6	+9/+4	+7	+7	+7	50	4th-level spells
14	Clr7/Rog7	+10/+5	+7	+7	+7	53	Sneak attack +4d6
15	Clr8/Rog7	+11/+6/+1	+8	+7	+8	57	Feat
16	Clr8/Rog8	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+8	60	Ability increase
17	Clr9/Rog8	+12/+7/+2	+8	+9	+8	64	5th-level spells
18	Clr9/Rog9	+12/+7/+2	+9	+9	+9	67	Feat, sneak attack +5d6, feat
19	Clr10/Rog9	+13/+8/+3	+10	+9	+10	71	
20	Clr11/Rog9	+14/+9/+4	+11	+9	+11	75	6th-level spells, ability increase

CHARACTER CHOICES

Most temple defenders tend to focus their skills, at least initially, on the academic learning they acquire during their temple training with skills such as Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (arcana), and Spellcraft. As cleric/fighters, skills are not their strong suit anyway, and little changes when they adopt the dwarven defender class.

Initially, a temple defender concentrates on the feats needed to qualify for the dwarven defender class: Dodge, Endurance, and Toughness. They often take Extra Turning, since undead are a common threat in their temples. They also like Power Attack, Cleave, and Great Cleave.

Character Level	Class Levels	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Ftr1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Bonus fighter feat, feat, martial weapon proficiency
2	Ftr1/Clr1	+1	+4	+0	+2	14	0- and 1st-level spells, turning
3	Ftr1/Clr2	+2	+5	+0	+3	18	Feat
4	Ftr1/Clr3	+3	+5	+1	+3	22	2nd-level spells, ability increase
5	Ftr1/Clr4	+4	+6	+1	+3	26	
6	Ftr2/Clr4	+5	+7	+1	+4	31	Bonus fighter feat, feat
7	Ftr2/Clr5	+5	+7	+1	+4	35	3rd-level spells
8	Ftr3/Clr5	+6/+1	+7	+2	+5	40	Ability increase
9	Ftr4/Clr5	+7/+2	+8	+2	+5	45	Bonus fighter feat, feat
10	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf1	+8/+3	+10	+2	+7	51	Defensive stance 1/day
11	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf2	+9/+4	+11	+2	+8	57	Defensive awareness (Dex bonus to AC)
12	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf2	+10/+5	+11	+3	+8	63	Ability increase, defensive stance 2/day, feat
13	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf4	+11/+6/+1	+12	+3	+9	69	
14	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf5	+12/+7/+2	+12	+3	+9	75	Defensive stance 3/day
15	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf6	+13/+8/+3	+13	+4	+10	81	Damage reduction (3), defensive awareness (can't be flanked), feat
16	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf7	+14/+9/+4	+13	+4	+10	87	Ability increase, defensive stance 4/day,
17	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf8	+15/+10/+5	+14	+4	+11	93	
18	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf9	+16/+11/+6/+1	+14	+5	+11	99	Defensive stance 5/day, feat
19	Ftr4/Clr5/Ddf10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+15	+5	+12	105	Damage reduction (6), defensive awareness (+1 vs. traps)
20	Ftr4/Clr6/Ddf10	+18/+13/+8/+3	+16	+6	+13	109	Ability increase

CY 588, ABSOLUTELY NOWHERE NEAR HOMMLET ...

KEOLAND BLUES

BY PAUL KIDD

ILLUSTRATED BY ADAM REX

In a forest lay a castle, near the castle lay a village, and all lay deserted under a dim autumnal sun. Swallows had made nests along the castle walls, the empty mud pots overlooking a swampy moat well filled with frogs. The broken castle had been left to molder, while the village it once served lay cold and silent as the grave.

In the aftermath of the luz wars, the Flanaess had no shortage of ruins and wilderness. Overgrown with weeds, the castle leaned tiredly over its moat as though contemplating imminent collapse.

A huge man dressed in armor made of black dragon scales stood in the courtyard. A shimmering black hell hound pelt hung down his back, the canine's head sitting atop the man's helmet and grinning madly with bright white fangs. The man's hand rested upon a huge sword that jutted through his belt. Heavy hiking boots, a backpack, a coil of enchanted rope, and armor made of black dragon scales—it was the equipment of a man who marched fast and slept rough. Shaven-headed, square, and suspicious, the Justicar carefully examined the mud upon the cobblestones. His eyes then coldly searched the battlement for the slightest stir of life.

Behind him, a strange little man came tottering over from a wagon parked outside the gates. With a physique like badly knotted string and sporting a great icebreaker prow of a nose, the little man marched grandly over and gave the warrior a boisterous slap upon the back.

"Y'see, boy? A ruin! Deserted! Wiped! This is luz's work. The relentless march of evil! It's started all over again." Tucking his thumbs beneath his suspenders and ignoring a dire glance from the warrior, the little man lectured happily on. "New wars. I knew it! I knew it! I guess I'll offer my services to the local kings as an advisor. No general's rank for me, son—not my style! Just quiet and unassuming, that's the way I am. Walk softly down the corridor of power. Speak when spoken to. Lead by example." The man walked grandly about the big warrior and his grinning hell-hound skin. "You know, son, we have twice as many ears as we do mouths. That's why a wise man listens more than he talks. Took that lesson to heart when I was a child. Stuck with me ever since. Heart and soul of rectitude, that's me! As a child I almost starved to death! Wouldn't tell my Pappy I was hungry."

Trying to put the noise behind him, the warrior knelt above a skull that lay yellowing in the mud. He touched the moss growing in cracks along the jawbone and then thoughtfully rubbed his fingers clean.

"Skeletons. This isn't Iuz's work."

Iuz's minions seized the fallen to swell the ranks of the undead. The castle had been a ruin for at least a hundred years, and the Iuz wars were only five or six years gone.

The castle seemed a place of little promise. The moat was deep, and something big, nasty, and spider-shaped seemed to be moving underneath the surface. The castle itself was a total wreck. Any treasures would have been taken long ago, leaving only traps. No one but a fool would believe otherwise.

All in all, it seemed a poor place to be asking for directions. Having trudged north for three days from a deserted piece of shore, the Justicar eyed his companion with a sigh.

"Polk, you're sure Hommlet is in Keoland?"

"Of course, boy! Common knowledge! Hommlet, Keoland. Go together like a hand in a glove. A sock in a shoe. A sword in a sheath!" Polk, travel consultant to adventurers, noisily consumed a pickled onion. "The ship dropped us off right where we want to be! We're almost there! Can't be more than a day's walk, maybe two. All we have to do now is ask directions!"

WITH PIERCING EYES THAT MISSED NOTHING, THE JUSTICAR LOOKED ABOUT THE ROOM.

"Where's the map, Polk?"

"Lost it." Polk said through a mouthful of onions. "Don't worry. Keoland! It was marked right there on the map. Memory's perfect, boy! That's where I get my efficiency. Brains, boy. Gotta have brains, or else you're just a mouth!"

Jus felt a headache coming on. The huge ranger slowly stood, rubbing at his temples

"Polk, shut up. Where are the others?"

"Others?" Still regarding the ruined castle in satisfaction, Polk the Teamster shrugged. "Flew ahead, boy. Scouting! That's the way to do it: proper organization. Wits against brawn, light against dark, good against evil!"

The warrior turned his searching gaze upon the castle keep. Dark, obviously trap laden, and dangerous, it was clearly a place to avoid.

"Let me guess. They went into the keep?"

"Of course, boy! That's what adventures are all about." Polk slapped his companion on the back. "Don't worry, son. These are ruin-exploration professionals! What could possibly go wrong?"

Inside the keep, an old library had become a happy hive of activity. Dust flew and books tumbled as a little winged figure whirred busily from shelf to shelf. Happy as a clam, she piled her loot and bawled over her shoulder toward the courtyard far below.

"Hey Jus! Jus, this is hoopy! I think these are spellbooks and stuff!"

Hovering gaily in mid air, wearing an outfit to make a mother scream and a father reach for weapons, Escalla the faerie happily threw scrolls all over the top of a decaying table. The crumbling old keep still had good ceilings; decades of wind and rain had kept out of the abandoned halls. Two feet tall and with her long blonde hair hanging straight and free, the little faerie sat herself down to start sifting through her find. She shouted raucously through a window as she opened the first scroll.

"Hey, Jus? Jus! There's not even any guard on these things! See? I told you this place would be great!"

A flash came from the scroll. A mighty pulse of force throbbed through the air. Escalla blinked, then looked in puzzlement at the door.

"Hey, anyone else feel that?"

A figure appeared at the door, a female face well dusted with freckles and with bobbed brown hair tied up into a hundred little braids. Big paws padded on the stone flags as her huge winged lion's body made its way into the library.

Enid the sphinx sat, curled her tail about her hind feet, and blinked.

"It felt like a spell."

"Huh? Well I can't see anything." Escalla gave an expressive shrug of her wings. "Any explosions or anything?"

"None so far." The sphinx peered about the room with big brown eyes. "I'm not sure I like it."

"Eh, it was probably nothing." The faerie flipped back her streaming hair. "Don't fret all the time! Hey, if anything happened, Jus and Polk would tell us. Right?" The girl dusted at her meager cleavage. "No traps are going to go off. Hey, remember? No one touches the faerie!"

A vast stone fist came pounding down from the ceiling, missing Escalla by a gnat's breadth as she walked across the floor. Enid the sphinx stared in amazement as a huge stone figure simply grew out of the castle wall. Silently, the stone golem opened hands the size of bedsteads and reached out to crush the two girls.

Escalla stood gaping. Enid snatched the faerie girl's skirt in her mouth and scrabbled backward through a door. The stone monster reached clean through the walls, simply growing out of the masonry and lumbering in pursuit. Dangling, undignified, and extremely annoyed, Escalla gave a hoot of joy and opened fire with a tried-and-trusted spell.

"Oh yeah? Well take *this,* you rock monster, you! Fireball!"

Spell energy flashed, hit the monster, and exploded with ferocious force. Wooden doors flew apart in a holocaust of flame. The wooden floor blasted apart, beams cracking and floorboards flying madly through the air. Enid blinked as the surface dropped away under her feet. She opened her big, feathered wings and landed in a room twenty feet below. Her huge feet thudded calmly down while half the castle collapsed above them. Escalla pulled free of Enid's mouth and did a wild little victory dance in the air.

"Yee-haw! Yeah! See that? No one touches the faerie!"

The walls shuddered as a vast mass of stone thundered into the room. The rock pile shifted, turned, then stood,

glowering down at the faerie and the sphinx. It now appeared annoyed. Red hot, it hissed smoke from the wooden floors. Enid watched the monster and made a little frown.

"Was a fireball really quite the thing? I don't think stone burns all that well."

"I know that!" Escalla dodged a blow from the golem that would have smashed her like an ant. "I'm on the problem! There's a faerie at work here!"

Unperturbed, Enid walked back out of range of the clumsy rock monster. "I still have a stun scroll. Maybe we should just use that?"

"Wait, wait. Here we go!" Escalla hovered, messing about with her frost wand. "All right, see? This was all part of a larger plan!"

The frost blast from Escalla's wand hit the golem right in the bread basket. Red hot stone met freezing ice. With a sound like splintering glass, great cracks shot all through the automaton's body. The golem stopped, looked at itself in annoyance, then reared high to the ceiling, ready to pound both fists down onto Escalla. Enid walked up and swatted the monster with one huge paw, and the golem shattered like toffee. Bits and splinters of stone thundered to the ground. The sound dwindled to a clatter, then a heavy silence.

"Escalla! Enid?" The Justicar's voice bellowed from out in the castle courtyard. "Escalla! Where the hell are you?"

Enid and Escalla looked at one another, then frantically began shoving pieces of broken golem out of sight. A door behind them wrenched open, and the Justicar thrust himself into the room. Grinning away from his helmet, Cinders the hell hound wagged his long black tail.

Hi!

"Hey pooch! Hey Jus!" Escalla gave a wave as innocent as a spring dawn. Behind her, Enid promptly sat down atop a chunk of the dead golem's face. "Look," said Escalla. "We found an old castle. Isn't it hoopy?"

With piercing eyes that missed nothing, the Justicar looked about the room with its suspiciously shaped chunks of stone. The floor above was still aflame, and bits of burning floorboard crashed into the rubble.

"All right, what have you done?"

"Done?" Escalla planted hands against her hips, looking the soul of innocent outrage. "What are you implying?"

Raising one eyebrow at her, the Justicar turned to Enid.

"She triggered a trap, didn't she?"

Enid tapped her great big claws, trying to be diplomatic. "Um, well, perhaps not a trap per se ..."

"Trap? Trap!" Escalla fluttered about the room in a high state of moral injury. "I'll have you know that I'm a ruin-exploration professional! I do not trigger traps!"

Jus turned to Enid.

"Enid?"

"Hey, she said there was no trap. Didn't you hear her say there was no trap?" The faerie draped herself over Enid's shoulders. "Hey, look at this sphinx! See that? That's the heart and soul of honesty! And why? Because she's got freckles! Freckles are the eyes of the gods. The goddess of truth and beauty watches everything this gal does, and all through those freckles. She's like a deluxe character witness supreme!"

Going cross-eyed trying to see her own freckles, Enid seemed pleased.

"Are freckles really a gift from the beauty goddess?"

A thump-thump-thumping came as Cinders wagged his tail.

Cinders likes freckles.

"There, see?" Escalla sat on the Justicar's shoulder. "You can trust me. I'm a faerie."

Tired from a long day of travel, and with the girl's chatter already giving him a headache, the Justicar settled Escalla in the crook of his arm.

"I told you not to go haring off on your own."

"We were not haring. We were covering the flanks." The faerie sniffed. "You just don't think I can look after myself!"

Annoyed, the Justicar gave a heavy sigh.

"I'm just saying that you'd need less looking after if you just took good advice once in a while."

"Good advice?" The faerie quirked her eyes ironically upward. "Like yours?"

"Yes."

"Ha ha! Well, I like that!" Escalla put a superior little expression on her face. "I'll have you know I am now a dungeon veteran. I'm a vampire-staking, Keraptis-kicking adventuress."

The Justicar gave another sigh.

"One dungeon doesn't make you smart enough to go running off on your own."

"What? Oh yeah?" Escalla flapped her hands. "All right, mister 'shaven-headed, I'm-so-good-with-a-sword!' Here's a bet. Whoever has the most shining evidence of 'adventure savvy' by the end of the day, they get dinner cooked for them tonight!"

"Escalla, I always cook dinner." The Justicar glowered. "What would make this time so special?"

"Yeah? Well this time in an apron, with a flower behind one ear!"

SPELL ENERGY FLASHED, HIT THE MONSTER, AND EXPLODED WITH FEROCIOUS FORCE.

The Justicar set the faerie down upon a severed golem hand.

"Fine. It's a bet. Hope there's an apron in your size." The big man moved away with his customary deadly grace, silent, dark, and poised for instant action. "There's a well in the courtyard. Let's fill water bottles and get moving. We still have to cover another five miles before dark."

He turned to go. Behind him, Cinders' voice drifted in empty air.

Apron on Justicar. Funny!

Left behind among chunks of shattered golem, Escalla sat on Enid and folded her arms. She went into a magnificent sulk.

"Hmmph! He thinks I cause accidents! And it's not true. I never cause accidents! None of us do!"

"Oh." Enid pulled her pretty freckles into a frown. "What about the voyage here? What about that ship we set on fire?"

Escalla waved her hands in protest.

"Hey, that was the hell hound's fault, and we now have that behavioral quirk relatively under control!"

"He set fire to the hold."

"He was rat catching!" The faerie flew off in search of interesting loot. "Hey, it got rid of the rats, didn't it? They ate my faerie cakes. They got what they deserved!" The girl lead the way upstairs toward an interesting set of doors. "Oh, hey, there's death runes all over these doors! Maybe there's something hoopy over here?"

Following close behind her, Enid anxiously bit her lip.

"Um, maybe we shouldn't?"

"Hey! Castles are designed to be lived in, right? No one would have actual death traps inside their *home!* Can you imagine walking off at night to take a leak if every second door could blow your giblets off?" The girl used all her puny strength to turn a door handle. "I mean, there's no magic aura here. What's going to happen? Like a dragon's going to teleport into the corridor and take revenge?"

Escalla opened the door, and there was a flash of magic. The faerie bit her lip, looked at Enid, and carefully let go of the door handle.

"Hey, I've got a better idea. Wanna check the cellar?"

The wall beside Escalla exploded inward with a roar. Huge chunks of masonry thundered across the floor as a vast reptilian head snarled into the room. Enid and Escalla recoiled into the rubble as huge fangs gaped. The dragon's head lunged straight for Escalla, who instantly shot aside, twisting from its path as the monster smashed the desk between its jaws.

Sunlight streamed in through the broken wall. A sword rang against hard scales, and a big man's voice bellowed in rage.

"Escalla! Get off your ass and help!"

Enid squawked and ducked as the dragon's head missed her by an inch, biting a chunk from the wooden door. The lizard roared, arching its head and filling the air with a hateful scream. Escalla took shelter behind Enid as an angry voice from outside deadened even the dragon's roar.

"Escalla! Now would be a good time!"

"Help? Ha! Fine!" The little faerie swung her frost wand down from its straps across her shoulder. "Hey iguana boy! Eat this!"

A blast of cold shot from the wand and smashed straight into the monster's open mouth, driving the creature back. The reptilian head rose, struck the ceiling, and shattered like a vase. Shards of frozen lizard skull skittered across the floor, one chunk striking Enid's flanks and sending her pedaling backward in disgust.

With its head missing, the neck flopped and pounded itself madly against the walls and floor. Emerging slowly from cover, Escalla and Enid blinked, then beamed in surprise. The faerie blew a trailing wisp of frost from her wand and then posed silkily in mid air.

"Ha! I'm a dragon slayer!" Crowing in victory, Escalla flipped out the long, brilliant strands of her hair, then draped herself happily atop the nervous sphinx. "Oooooh, maybe I should just set up a booth at the fair. Touch the hero's foot, one gold Royal. Kiss her butt for fifty!"

Enid nervously cleared her throat.

"Are you sure it's actually dead?"

"Sure I'm sure! Did you see that? *Bam!*" Escalla smacked one fist into the palm of her other hand. "These critters aren't so tough! All you need is the looks, the brains, and the talent! Hon, we had it outclassed!"

The wall behind them instantly exploded. Roaring dragons' heads blasted inward through the door, the walls, the roof, the floor. Escalla blinked, bemused, as the entire room collapsed, leaving her and Enid hovering in mid air.

The Justicar stood fighting a swarm of serpents. Wild with anger, he flashed a long black bastard sword up into a parry, deflecting jaws that lunged straight at his throat. Moving in a blur almost too fast to see, the big man pivoted, his black blade flashing back to send a lizard head bouncing to the floor.

Four more reptile heads were already lunging in to the attack. They came from behind, from below, over the walls, and through the weeds. As he slammed two more heads aside, a third exploded upward through the cobbles and lunged straight toward his spine.

Escalla saw the fangs lunging for her friend's back and gave a little scream of fright.

"Jus!"

The big man turned. Atop his helmet, the hell hound's face poised, its big grin gleaming—and then blasted a storm of flames right into the monster's maw. The reptile's head charred, its snake-neck whipping high and beating its burning skull to fragments against the castle walls.

More heads lunged up out of the rubble. Escalla hovered, smoothed her long leather opera gloves, and made an appropriately martial frown.

"Snakes! I hate snakes!"

She spread her hands, trilled a syllable, and then shot a sizzling lightning bolt straight toward empty space between three serpent's necks. The long necks wove aside, reared to attack the human below them, then all jerked in surprise as the lightning bolt split three ways and scythed three heads clean from their necks.

Below Escalla, Jus stood shielding Polk as he fought. A lizard skull split as the Justicar's black sword hacked downward. As a second head lunged in from one side, Jus roared, punched it with one fist, pinned it with his boot as it sagged, and clove the creature's neck in two.

"Cinders!"

Flame blasted from the canine head atop the big man's helm. A blazing lizard head arched in agony above, and the hell hound skin grinned maniacally in glee.

Burn! Burn burn burn!

Escalla shot sideways through the air and leveled her finger. A spell detonated amid a nest of dragon's heads, blasting necks apart and scattering chunks of meat and skull across the ground. All the snakes were dead, only their bodies kept thrashing in an appalling unwillingness to die.

Relative silence fell. Giving a sigh of relief, the faerie swooped down to land atop the smoking hell hound pelt and patted the creature's lustrous black fur.

"Hey, pooch! Well done!"

Done! Cinders wagged his tail. *Well done. Smells good!*

"Um, yeah ... whatever." Escalla cleared her throat, then hung her head upside down to peer past the Justicar's helmet brim and into the man's face. "Hi, Jus! Hoopy fight, huh? Snakes! Who'd have guessed!"

The Justicar—more than two hundred pounds of shaven-headed ill humor—glared daggers at the faerie.

"What did you do?"

"Me?" Escalla spread her hands in innocent protest. "Why do you think it was me?"

"Inspired guess work."

The Justicar slowly and carefully wiped down the blade of his wolf-skull pommeled sword. Enid the sphinx crept quietly out of the rubble, then scratched her ear with one hind paw. She sat beside the only really busy member of the party, Polk.

Escalla spread her wings and whirred over to the little man, who sat hurriedly scribbling notes into a gigantic book.

"Hey Polk. Whatcha doing?"

"Chronicling!" Loud, energetic, and forever on top of his world, Polk the Teamster took a quick count of the swaying serpent necks about the courtyard. "I make it twelve! Not bad."

"Twelve snakes." Jus shot a sharp glance at the faerie as she hovered innocently nearby. "I told you not to touch anything!"

"Hey, man, looting is one of the basic pleasures of the adventurer's life! It's natural! You wouldn't want me to do anything unnatural, would you?"

"Ask me that when you put a longer hemline on that dress!"

"Hey, skimpy fashions are all part of my endearingly roguish image." The faerie made a haughty little sashay. "Anyway, we have a real adventuring mission. We have property to occupy." Escalla waved a set of deeds in the air. "Village of Hommlet, one keep, and one abandoned temple with underground monster storage facility!"

"Underground monster storage facility!" The Justicar irritably sheathed his blade. "More snakes!"

Polk hovered over a severed serpent's head, taking notes upon a scroll.

"Now now, son, don't be too hasty! A fight isn't over until we've cataloged the kill."

Wiping his bald head, Jus speared the little man with a glower.

"Polk, the fight's over. The beasts are dead."

"Not yet, son! Not yet!" Polk flipped through a bestiary, looking thoughtfully at the remains. "Proper identification is always necessary for decent chronicle. Can't write up your adventures unless we get the facts straight!" Polk measured the bite span of a severed reptilian head, then stuck his axe-beak nose back into his books. "They might not be snakes!"

From her position just above, Escalla dodged as a snake neck thrashed and slammed itself against the castle stones.

"Hey guys? All these things were heads. Where are their tails?"

Puzzled, Escalla whirred a little closer to a thrashing neck.

"Hey ... hey, guys? I don't think these things are really snakes!"

With a deafening scream of rage, a serpent head smashed through the cobbles and almost engulfed Escalla from below. Escalla shrieked and sped aside, crashing against a wall and landing next to the stump of a severed serpent neck.

The neck stump bulged, split, and suddenly erupted into life. Splitting through the severed neck came two fresh serpent heads —two fresh necks, with two sets of screaming, maddened fangs.

From out in the courtyard, Polk's voice rose in triumph.

"Jus! Here it is, boy! It's a regenerating hydra! That's a type of dragon-snake! Sez here it might have more than one head!"

A DOZEN HYDRA HEADS SCREAMED FOR BLOOD. ENID SWATTED, DOVE, AND FOUGHT, SPREADING HER WINGS TO FLY.

"Really?" Up to his armpits in snake heads, The Justicar hacked furiously with his blade. "No kidding!"

Squealing, Escalla leapt skyward to escape a set of lunging jaws. A serpent head tried to engulf Escalla whole. Enid roared and slashed out with her claws, ripping the head clean from its neck an inch before it ate the faerie. The severed neck stump instantly began to writhe, two more heads already starting to emerge from the wound.

The Justicar was surrounded by a weaving forest of seven heads. They dove and sliced toward him, and now the big man could only parry, twist, and dodge. He had already sliced one serpent head away, and a pair of replacement heads gleamed wet with mucous as they hissed for blood. Behind the Justicar, Polk sat and blinked, realizing that he was in danger of becoming a lizard's lunch. Cinders burned two more heads from the hydra's necks. Snakes screamed, charred, swerved, and died ... and then Cinders's flames sputtered out and ran dry.

A dozen hydra heads screamed for blood. Enid swatted, dove, and fought, spreading her wings to fly. The panniers of scrolls, riddles, and spells slung across her back swayed as hydra heads raked at her hide. Escalla detonated another fireball, saw the burned heads were unable to regenerate, and then bit her lip and ran her hand frantically through her list of spells.

Inspiration came, as it usually did, with a rush of supreme smugness.

"Enid? Enid, come on! Get inside!"

Enid pounced upon a hydra neck, tore through its spine with her teeth, then leaped away. Escalla hovered in a doorway, apparently abandoning Jus to his solitary fight out on the cobbles. The man somehow fought half a dozen hydra heads to a standstill, blocking, dodging, slamming his fists viciously into lizard jaws, and not daring to cut into hydra necks. He protected Polk and managed to flick a glance toward Escalla.

"It has to have a body! Kill the body, and the heads will die!"

"It's all right!" Escalla waved as Enid passed beneath her. "Just a second! Just hold still!"

Enid was already unshipping her panniers and opening an ivory case. Hovering just inside the doorway, the little faerie spread her hands, drew in a deep breath, then molded an illusion. A fake thicket of raspberry bushes sprang into life, hiding Polk and Jus from the hydra's view. Escalla posed in the castle door, waggling her wings and waving toward half a dozen enraged hydra snouts.

"Coo-eee! Hey boys!"

Hydra heads whipped about, fangs gaping, spittle dripping from them. Escalla bent down to present them with her taut little rear, slapping herself on one cheek.

"Yoo hoo! Hey, lizard lips! Come and get it. Faerie butt! Primo condition! One chance only! Get it while it's sizzling hot!"

The serpent heads shot toward her, roaring in anger. As the first one sped beneath the door into the castle halls, it passed beneath a papyrus seal planted on the lintel by Enid's busy paws. A sheet of force crashed downward, running a jolt of power down the creature's neck and into the body somewhere far beyond.

The Justicar was already out of cover, plodding stolidly across the courtyard and following the necks to their source. All around him, hydra heads lay stunned, their eyes glazed and open. Polk emerged from behind his backpack, blinking owlishly as he stared about himself in shock.

"It's dead! Well, that's fine, son. About time. You're still learning, so I'll forgive you." Polk struggled to his feet and tottered after the Justicar. "So, how'd you do it in? Was it from a blow of your mighty blade? Was it righteous steel? Purity of heart? Son, what brought the monster down?"

HYDRA HEADS WHIPPED ABOUT, FANGS GAPING, SPITTLE DRIPPING FROM THEM.

"The girls lured it onto a stun symbol." Jus tossed a burning brand to Polk. "Here, I'll cut the heads off, and you burn the stumps." The big ranger hacked down into a hydra's neck. "Come on. We don't have much time."

Sitting atop Enid's shoulders, Escalla watched the men at work and gave a satisfied sigh. "Well, we got that all cleaned up! Trust a man to let a girl do the bulk of the job!"

Enid picked unhappily at her claws.

"Yesss ..." The sphinx bit her lip. "Though it was really sort of our fault that there was a monster in the first place."

"Jus doesn't mind! He loves that kind of stuff!" Escalla happily slapped Enid on the back. "See, if he was mad, he'd say something!"

Jus had heard her. In the courtyard, he shot a dire glance up toward Escalla.

"Stay there. Touch nothing!"

"Nothing!" Escalla froze with a grin, already eying the cellars below the castle. "Not a stone! Not a nail, not a blade of grass!" The faerie held up her hands "See?"

Jus growled and went back to work. Atop his helm, Cinders grinned his manic grin and happily breathed the fumes of roasting hydra neck.

Yum!

"You actually like this smell?"

Homey!

Enid turned to contemplate the remnants of her papyrus stun-seal with a sigh.

"Oh dear. It takes me an entire week to make one of those stun symbols."

"Worse still, it takes cash! A thousand-gold-piece gem!" Escalla grumbled. "Oh well—we're still ahead in the treasure department! There must be a ton of valuable stuff in that library ..."

Enid and Escalla heard a crash of falling rubble. The library where Escalla had found her scrolls lay buried beneath flaming wreckage. Here and there, flames showed where the edges of a fireball had engulfed scraps of floorboard, rafters, and parchment. Enid and Escalla looked glumly at the ruins. Trying to see a bright side to it all, Escalla cleared her throat.

"Eh, well, we have a castle! That has to be a plus!"

In erupting upward from the cellars underneath, the hydra had undermined the entire foundations. One of the castle walls fell slowly over even as they watched, splashing down into the overgrown moat and scattering a horde of panicked frogs.

Escalla tapped the points of her index fingers together.

"Look, there'll be something hoopy around the next corner. Don't worry! We'll find some treasure, have some fun—even find the way to Hommlet! We just have to have faith!"

Looking over the castle, Enid gave a sigh. The big sphinx rummaged about in a backpack as the Justicar and Polk came limping over across the rubble.

Enid dragged dirty white cloth out into the light.

"Well, we can probably stay here for the night. You'll never get a proper dinner started otherwise." She presented Jus and Escalla with tattered lengths of cloth. "There are two old sheets here. That should do you both as aprons."

The Justicar could only stare in dazed amazement.

"What?"

"Well Polk showed the most pertinent knowledge. So I suppose the two of you will just have to cook him dinner with flowers behind your ears." The sphinx looked thoughtfully up at the rubble of the castle. "Are the primroses in bloom? I think amber would really set off the color of the Justicar's eyes."

"That or bright red. Ha!" Escalla heaved a sigh, then held up an old handkerchief that might possibly tear into a decent apron. "You got me! We'll do something from my recipe book. Hey, Jus? Come on, bright eyes. Let's do what the lady says. After all, she's the one with the freckles." The girl flitted gaily past. "Come on! If we get it done quick enough, we can play The Baron and the Scullery Maid. I'll even let you wear the maid outfit first!"

Too tired to argue, the Justicar tied Cinders firmly into place over his helmet and followed the faerie girl.

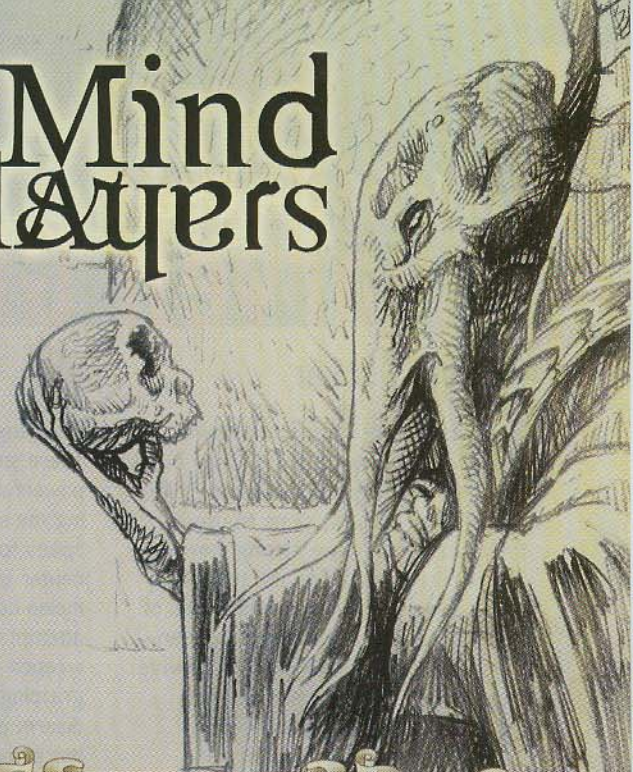
"Escalla, do we even have ingredients for any of the food in your recipe book?"

"We can substitute with fresh foods from the wild! We'll do beef ragout."

'Beef?"

"Beef, tree frog. Same difference. It'll be a blast!" Escalla slapped the big man on the shoulder and lead the way into the undergrowth. "Hey trust me! I'm a faerie!"

Mind flayers



no. 19

by Mike Selinker

Some of the most powerful devices ever described in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS can be found in the grid below. The 28 devices are all clued at the bottom in alphabetical order by their answers. Once you've unearthed all the wondrous treasures in the word search grid, a definition of artifacts and relics from the 2nd Edition *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* will be spelled out from left to right and top to bottom in the unused letters.

F R A G A R A C H O L Y G R A I L
T R E B H T U C F O E C A M E C X
B O C K S A M S E E D Y H O J I U
A S R E S C A T S C L A W T F N O
B L A C K R A Z O R R K A H T G H
A T R E O D A M M E T S N G O D S
Y H B I R F L E X D E O D I A E O
A G S K N E T C G N A U O M W A U
G I N U H L A H I I Y L F F A T L
A M N W N L O U E R S G O O D H S
S F E V I S R J U G G E R N A U T
H O E B R B W Y M M O M C W R U O
U B U L L E H O E O C D U O A A N
T R S A K F O D R O W S S R R V E
E O S P I H S R E D I P S C T O E
E Y E O F V E C N A L N O G A R D

CLUES

1. Reflective shield bearing Medusa's visage
2. Sword held by the Banelich in the ruins of Zhentil Keep
3. Animate dwelling of a Russian sorceress
4. Ebon blade under White Plume Mountain
5. Dagger thrown by the Gray Mouser
6. Gold diadem of evil, good, or neutrality
7. Gigantic destructive bulldozer piloted by derro
8. Weapon wielded by Huma against wyrms
9. Sword drawn from a stone
10. Item that demands temporary partial blindness
11. Steel broadsword found in the Temple of Elemental Evil
12. Quest of the Knights of the Round Table
13. One of Drizzt Do'Urden's blades
14. Facial cover that allows imitation of anyone
15. Elephantine steamroller in the Tomb of Horrors
16. Clerical weapon of law and good
17. Thor's giant-smiter
18. Companion sphere to #6
19. Jewel at the heart of the Ghost Tower of Inverness
20. Jewel that binds Diablo and his demonic brethren
21. Lolth's movable arachnoid base
22. Its hilt is in Strahd von Zarovich's castle in Ravenloft
23. Evil sword owned by the lieutenant of the lich in #10
24. Bejewelled circlet forged by the Celtic god Goibhniu
25. The other of Drizzt Do'Urden's blades
26. Scepter wielded by a demon lord
27. Trident found in White Plume Mountain
28. Warhammer also found in White Plume Mountain

MIND BLAST

A member of the creative team that developed 3rd Edition has a name that scrambles to the word DARKEST. Who is that person?

You can find the solution to this *MIND BLAST* on page 84.

no. 18 SOLUTION

	S	U	B	U	C	C	U	S		A	S	M	O	D	E	U	S			
B		S			H			U								H				
A		S	E	N	A	M		C	A	M	B	I	O	N		G				
R		A			S			R			A					O				
L		B			M			O	B	I	R	E	P	P	U	N				
G	L	A	B	R	E	Z	U		A		B		I			E				
U		N		E					B		A		T			E				
R				T					A		Z		F			Y				
A	L	U	T	A	M	A	H		U		U		I		S		G			
		Z		P						N		L	E	M	U	R	E			
		I		S	P	I	N	A	G	O	N		N		E		R			
		N		I						G			D		D		Y			
N	O	M	E	D	U	L	A			U					Y		O			
I		A							E	E	N	H	S	E	F	L	A	N		
K										R			R		O					
R	E	D	I	R	D				H		O		T	I	A	M	A	T		
E							D	R	E	T	C	H		N					B	
T					M				Z					Y					A	
T			L		A				R		X			E			N		A	
U		N	O	G	R	O	G	O	M	E	D			S			O		L	
R			L		I				U		L						G		Z	
			T		L						B				V		U		E	
	I	A	H	S	I	B	A				I				R	O	L	A	B	
					T				H	T	U	L	Y	S	O		E		U	
					H						J				C		G		L	
															K					

Tools of the Deep: Dwarven Gizmos

by Jesse Decker

Dwarves pit themselves against their mountain homes. They burrow into the earth, searching for precious metals and gems to use in their crafts. They are strong, hardy, and perfectly suited to the tunnels in which they dwell. Among the races of the surface, they are tough and dangerous warriors. However, to survive under their mountain homes, the dwarves must rely on more than brawn. It's dwarven ingenuity and craftsmanship, more than dwarven might, that keeps the air in the mines fresh, overcomes difficult climbs, and responds quickly to threats to the clan.

Beneath the Lortmil Mountains, the Bouldan clan has become wealthy by braving the dangers of the depths. Many dwarves consider the Bouldans a lucky clan, but clan Bouldan prefers to make its own luck. The finest inventor of his age, Morikan Batal-Rusk has designed the tools that have made his clan financially secure. Because of Morikan's inventions, most of the mineral wealth around the clan's hold has been successfully mined. Now, the Bouldan's trade is dominated by trade with other dwarven clans. Clan Bouldan lacks raw materials, but Morikan's inventions are sold to other clans at a hefty profit. Because of their specialized function and unique design, other races have shown little interest in Morikan's inventions. Currently, only dwarves near the County of Ulek have ready access to these items. In other areas, some of the items might be available, but their rarity causes an inflation in prices.

Weapon Gadgets

Dwarves seldom pass up an opportunity for a fight. Their love of shaping metal often leads to the creation of new and ingenious weapons and devices. Many of these remain secrets known only to the dwarven clan that invented them. Here are two such inventions that have become relatively common.

Grasping Shield

These small, spiked metal shields have a powerful spring inside them. By releasing the spring, the wielder causes the spikes to collapse inward toward the center of the shield. When this is done in melee combat, it allows the user to attempt to grasp and wrest away a weapon wielded by an opponent. The grasping attack, when used, allows one disarm attempt. This disarm attempt does not provoke an attack of opportunity, nor does it allow the defender a chance to disarm the attacker. The disarm is an attack action. All normal penalties for attacking with an off hand or two weapons apply to the disarm attempt.

Once sprung, the grasping shield functions as a normal small, metal shield until reset. Resetting the shield is a full-round action.

Spike Shooter

This is a modification of a class of weapons, rather than a specific weapon itself. This spring-driven device can modify any weapon that has a spike at the end of a long pole (such as most polearms or battleaxes). The spike shooter allows the spike to be launched at a target as a normal attack. The spike shooter is an inaccurate weapon and those who use it suffer a -2 penalty to the ranged attack roll. Resetting the spike is a full-round action.

Climbing Aids

Climbing is an important part of mining, and therefore of dwarven culture. The following items were developed to make life easier and safer for dwarves working the steepest, most treacherous veins.

Rope Climber

This hand-held device consists of a powerful winch and a locking wheel assembly that fits most standard ropes. When threaded with a rope, the winch offers one-way travel with the benefit of tremendous leverage. Using the climber to ascend a rope grants a +5 circumstance bonus to the Climb check, but it halves the rate of ascent. Threading a rope through the climber is a full-round action, as is removing it from a rope. The locking wheels only turn in one direction, preventing the user from slipping back down the rope. However, this means that for two people to use the same rope climber, one must ascend the rope, remove the device, and lower it back down to the next user.

Mobile Brace

This small staff can extend and lock at any length from 5 to 11 feet. It is most commonly used to make a sturdy brace across a passage, granting a sure purchase for one or more ropes. A properly set brace can support up to 400 pounds of weight. (This weight limit can be lowered at the DM's discretion if the walls are soft, slippery, crumbling, or otherwise offer unsure purchase.)

Setting a brace allows characters to securely set a rope or grappling hook where doing so normally would be impossible. Adventuring groups can send a skilled climber or jumper to negotiate tricky ascents or dangerous falls, set a brace on the far side of the obstacle, then give less nimble characters something to hang on to while they cross the dangerous area.

Bellows Technology

Bellows technology uses air pressure generated by walking in specially made boots to power a host of useful items. Bellows technology is one of the great breakthroughs of dwarven engineering. It allows the almost tireless dwarven miners to use the power of their own legs to light the way for guests not gifted with darkvision, keep themselves supplied with breathable air, or power deadly weapons.

Boot Pumps

The cornerstone of bellows technology, the boot pumps, when worn, provide pneumatic power for other items.

Answer to Mind Blast: D&D Creative Director ED STARK.

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Grasping shield	50 gp	10 lb.	
Spike shooter	25 gp	1 lb.	Price and weight are additions to the weapon
Rope climber	15 gp	3 lb.	
Mobile brace	10 gp.	3 lb.	
Boot pumps	50 gp	20 lb.	Required to use any bellows item
Headlamp	15 gp	3 lb.	Bellows item
Headlamp refill	5 gp	1 lb.	
Bellows mask	20 gp	3 lb.	Bellows item
Mask filter refill	5 gp	1 lb.	
Hurler	200	35 lb.	Bellows item, 20% miss chance
Liqui-jet	150	35 lb.	Bellows item

WEAPONS	COST	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	WT.	TYPE	NOTES
Spike shooter	25	1d4	–	10	1 lb.	P	
Hurler	200	*	–	50	35 lb.	–	20% miss chance
Liqui-Jet	150	1d6†	–	–	35 lb.	–	1 pt. splash damage

* Damage caused by a hurler depends on the object hurled. Alchemist's fire and acid do 1d6 points of damage plus 1 point of splash damage.
† This assumes a load of alchemical fire. Liqui-jets have no range increment. They are a ranged weapon with a maximum range of 10 feet. Attacks with the liqui-jet incur attacks of opportunity like other ranged weapons.

Special bellowslike devices built into the boots force air up tubes that run along the back of the wearer's legs. The air is compressed further in small compartments within the item being powered. Without air pressure supplied by boot pumps, none of the other bellows items work. One set of boot pumps can only power one bellows item at a time. Switching the pressure supply to another bellows item takes 2 full-round actions: one to disconnect the first item, the second to connect a different item.

The wearer must walk continuously to keep the boots functioning, which places great strain on the wearer. Time spent wearing the boots is exhausting, and only those with hardy constitutions can wear them for long. Characters wearing boot pumps must make a Fortitude check every half hour (DC 10 + 1 per half hour spent wearing the boot pumps). If the check fails, the wearer takes 1d6 points of subdual damage and is fatigued. The wearer must halt and rest for at least 4 hours to recover. In addition, wearing the boot pumps reduces the wearer's speed by 5 feet.

Using the boot pumps in combat is also difficult. To keep the bellows working, the wearer must take a move-equivalent action each round. This action can be combined with a move action if the wearer moves at least 10 feet.

Wearing boot pumps makes moving quietly all but impossible. Anyone wearing boot pumps suffers a -10 penalty to her Move Silently checks.

Headlamp

One of the simplest devices to use the bellows technology, this lamp doesn't depend on fire or magic to provide light. The lamp is attached to a headband and contains a mixture of chemicals that, when agitated by air, give off light. The light from a headlamp is equivalent to that of a torch.

When sealed in an airtight container, the chemicals can last up to a year. Once they are exposed to air (such as when they're placed in the headlamp), they last for 4 hours.

The headlamp is a bellows item; it cannot function without air pressure supplied by a pair of boot pumps.

Bellows Mask

Of the three main dangers of mining—collapsing tunnels, flooding, and dangerous gasses—the last is the hardest to detect and therefore the most dangerous. When powered by boot pumps, these masks deliver filtered air to the wearer. The mask consists of a complicated series of miniature bellows that force the air through several alchemical filters, thus purifying it. Characters wearing a bellows mask gain a +10 circumstance bonus to resist all effects caused by gas.

A bellows mask offers no help underwater or in other situations where there is no breathable air. In order for a bellows mask to function, there must be at least some oxygen in the area.

The bellows mask is a bellows item; it cannot function without air pressure supplied by a pair of boot pumps.

Hurler

The hurler is a hand-held weapon that uses bellows technology to hurl objects or flasks full of dangerous substances great distances. The most common projectile is alchemist's fire, but hurlers can launch flasks filled with nearly any substance. Because of the difficulty of using such a large ranged weapon and the constant motion required to use boot pumps, hurlers are notoriously inaccurate and always have a 20% miss chance. Roll each attack normally; if the attack is successful, roll percentile dice. If the result is 20% or lower, the attack misses.

Hurlers can also be used to launch stones, grappling hooks, or other objects, usually beyond the throwing range of most dwarves.

The hurler is a bellows item; it cannot function without air pressure supplied by a pair of boot pumps.

Liqui-jet

The liqui-jet uses bellows technology to spray liquid with a fair amount of precision. This mining tool is most often used to spray water in the event of a mine or forge fire; however, it has occasionally been used as a weapon when filled with fluids like alchemist's fire. Liqui-jets are capable of firing liquids in a 10 foot cone. Since they count as a ranged attack and are only effective from 10 feet away or less, any offensive use of a liqui-jet on a Medium-size target always provokes an attack of opportunity.

A liqui-jet can only hold the contents of one flask of liquid at a time. It takes a full-round action to reload the device.

The liqui-jet is a bellows item; it cannot function without air pressure supplied by a pair of boot pumps.

Nodwick in:
Furious Forge
LOOK, I KNOW I HEARD A NOISE FROM THE KITCHEN! IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMETHING FALLING DOWN THE CHIMNEY!
MOST OF THE GRUB WE'RE SERVED IS STILL MOVIN' ON THE PLATE! SOMETHIN' IN THE POT WAS PROB'LY TRYIN' TO ESCAPE. WHAT'S COOKIN', ANYWAY?
UH, IT LOOKS LIKE HENCHMAN-ON-A-ROPE SOUP.
THE FEMALES MUST BE BUYIN' KOBOLD COOKBOOKS AGAIN. ANY SIGN OF DESSERT?
I THINK WE'RE HAVING AN ATTACK OF OPPORTUNITY.
AGAIN?
THE ORCS ARE SLICED AND SERVED...
LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, NODWICK; YOU SMELL DELICIOUS!
WHY ARE WE HERE, AGAIN?
TO SEEK OUT THE FOUNDRY OF AN ANCIENT DWARVEN SMITH! IF WE FIND IT, HIS MASTERWORKS WILL MAKE US RICH!
LATER...
HEADS UP, FOLKS! I THINK THE ORC IN THE NEXT ROOM IS A CLERIC!
LET'S SEE...
EVIL for Dummies
SHE'S GOT THE LOOK, FOR SURE...
THIS IS MY DEPARTMENT. LET ME AT HER!
AN EPIC BATTLE ENSUED...
BUNNIES!
RATS!
BUTTERFLIES!
COCKROACHES!
FRESH FRUIT!
ROTTEN MEAT!
RAINBOWS!
TORNADOES!
DUCKIES!
VULTURES!
MARTHA STEWART!!
ARE YOU SURE SHE'S EVIL? HER CRAFTS ARE JUST SO DARLING, AND HER COOKIE RECIPES ARE YUMMY!
BUT SHE MAKES PEOPLE FEEL LIKE UNDERACHIEVERS WITH NO TASTE IN DÉCOR.
TELL YOU WHAT: I'M LATE FOR MY SKULL-EXTRACTION CLASS AND WE COULD GO ON FOR HOURS, SO... KEEP YOUR PALS OUT OF MY JUNK AND WE'LL CALL IT A DRAW.
M'KAY!
IT'S GREAT TO WATCH PROFESSIONALS WORK, ISN'T IT?
OUR HEROES MEET THE CHIEF OF THE ORCS...
HEY, CHIEF! DON'T MIND US, WE'RE JUST PASSIN' THROUGH. GRUNT TWICE IF YOU UNDERSTAND.
WHA...?
GUARDS! SEIZE THEM!
SORRY, BUT YOUR GUARDS ARE BUSY.
WHAT?!
WE CONVINCED THEM THAT AN ORC SHOULD LEAD THEM INSTEAD OF AN OGRE. SO, OUR WIZARD CAST HOLD ELECTION FOR THEM. DO YOU WANT A CAMPAIGN BUTTON?
VOTE ORC!

THEY'LL BE CASTING BALLOTS SOON, BUT YOU MIGHT STILL HAVE TIME TO THROW YOUR LOINCLOTH INTO THE RING!
I DOUBT HE'LL WIN. HIS OPPONENT HAS A GREAT TAX PLAN...
LATER, FURTHER BELOW THE MOUNTAIN...
WHAT OOKEY-SMELLING CAVES!
EITHER YEAGAR HAD GARLIC FOR LUNCH, OR TROGLODYTES LIVE DOWN HERE.
IT'S TIME FOR A CUNNING PLAN...
GREAT PLAN, ARTAX!
I FIGURED FOUL-SMELLING BEASTS WOULD FALL BEFORE A GOOD PERFUME.
BUT "EAU DE CLERIQUE" DOES MORE THAN MASK BAD ODORS! IT MAKES THEM SEE THE ERROR OF THEIR WAYS AND CONVERTS THEM TO THE TENETS OF CLEANLINESS AND POTPOURRI!
THIS IS IT! THE ANCIENT DWARVEN FORGE!
... AND SOMEONE BEAT US TO IT!
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE? IF YOU DON'T GIVE ME A GOOD REASON FOR YOUR TRESPASSING, I'LL HAVE YOU ARRESTED FOR CORPORATE ESPIONAGE!
OH! WELL... LET ME TURN YOU OVER TO OUR CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL, NODWICK!
THANKS A HEAP.
SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WE WERE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS LOST FORGE WAS... WELL, LOST.
IT WAS, BUT WE RE-OPENED IT WHEN WE GOT A FAT CONTRACT TO CRAFT A LINE OF ACTION FIGURES!
YOU MEAN DOLLS?
THEY'RE ACTION FIGURES!! DOLLS ARE SISSY TOYS! WE MAKE ACTION FIGURES!!
I STAND CORRECTED..
I GUESS WE SHOULD GO HOME NOW, HUH?
UNLESS YOU WANT TO MAKE DOLL--ER, ACTION FIGURES, YES.
HANG ON, ARTAX...
TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS CONTRACT. MAYBE IF WE AGREE TO KEEP THIS PLACE A SECRET, WE CAN STRIKE A DEAL.
WELL, THIS FUNNY-LOOKING HUMAN CAME TO US AND SAID HE HAS A BUSINESS SHIPPING STUFF TO OTHER PLANES, ESPECIALLY THINGS CALLED "MOVIE TIE-INS."
I THINK WE'RE GOING TO NEED MY GATE SPELL...
UM, THIS IS ONE OF THOSE THINGS GUYS DO WHEN THEY THINK NO ONE IS LOOKING, RIGHT? KIND OF LIKE--
HEY! I THOUGHT WE AGREED TO NEVER BRING UP MY SOCK DRAWER AGAIN!
LATER...
DUDE! YOU GOT THE D&D MOVIE ACTION FIGURES A MONTH EARLY!
YEAH. SOME RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL NUTJOBS SOLD 'EM TO ME. IT WAS FUNNY; THEY DEMANDED TO BE PAID IN GOLD PIECES.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED ALL THOSE SACAJAWEA DOLLAR COINS.

The Adventures of VOLO

LOST TREASURES OF CORMYR

by Ed Greenwood · illustrated by Ron Spencer

Volothamp Geddarm, at your service, gentles, setting truths of the Realms before you like long-lost jewels, glinting in the light of astonished glances as I set them before folk who never dreamed that old folktales would come to life before their eyes ...

When folk of Cormyr and visitors to that fair realm get to talking of treasure, they speak first of the fabled riches that fill royal vaults beneath the Palace in Suzail, the dozens of treasuries under High Horn, and richness from other fortresses of the kingdom.

Then they turn to the magics that must have been amassed—and hidden—by the Lord Mages of Cormyr, from legendary Baerauble onwards. Even those who bitterly resent the high-handedness of Vangerdahast admit that he's the Cormyrian epitome of shrewd. Few doubt that he can call on wealth to beggar the most proud noble houses without ever touching a coin of the royal treasuries. There are many who mutter darkly that he and his sorcerous predecessors might well have personally plundered royal vault after vault with no one the wiser.

Here I speak of more modest treasures—the riches on which the noble families of Cormyr stand. There is land and herds upon them, carts groaning yearly with produce, and castles in which lesser men can rent storerooms. There are also lost coins and gems. Of course, they're always found by someone and then hidden away. Sometimes, knowledge of these treasures die with the owner—but there are ways of learning such secrets even after death...

There's a grotto somewhere in Cormyr—I dare not reveal its actual location—in which eerie magic preserves floating, crumbling things that were once the brains of a select few Cormyrians. To touch them is to be nigh overwhelmed by failing yet desperate sentiences that seek to live anew, to seize one's body for their own. Yet if one is strong—as I was, though my survival was uncomfortably endangered—and resists the furious compulsions, one can command memories out of those fading minds and know of folk long dead and gone.

I might well return to that place one day and see more of kings and the like, but for now, hearken as I present more modest folk out of the mists of bygone times. Please bear in mind that some of the dates given herein, and even more lore, might be mistaken or false; I've had to rely on sages in dotage and fragmentary public records to properly place into history vivid scenes that were not my own memories!

Some of those concerned with our hidden treasures predate Cormyr itself.

THE RAYBURTON JEWELS

In the days of the dawn of Cormyr, when elves ruled the Wolf Woods and men were intruders scratching rude farms out of the dark and forbidding forest, the first tale of lost treasure was born. It swirled around but never touched the Obarskyrs and involved these men, the founders of proud and noble Cormyrian families:

Belmer Oelber Rayburton
(-43 DR-36 DR)
The fat, toad-featured, coarse-skinned, and loutish Belmer was a fearless warrior and avid hunter, and an essentially simple soul. His unruly brown hair and glittering black eyes made him stand out, and he never stopped scratching (fleas, no doubt). His normal modes of speech were the grunt and spit (the former constant, the latter when angry), but he knew where and how to hunt good game—a valuable skill in the fledgling Cormyr.

Belmer swung a huge morningstar and a stout handaxe. Never shy of battle, he took his greatest pleasures from hunting, outfacing foes, and gorging himself at the table.

Onkyl Drethan Rayburton
(-40 DR-41 DR)
The tall, laconic Onkyl was Belmer's younger brother; together they brought their families into what was to become Cormyr. Where Belmer was the expert hunter, Onkyl was the scholar and a natural organizer and rememberer-of-details. He was fearful of beasts, elves, dragons, orcs, forests, and just about everything else he found in the savage land of Cormyr a-borning. He wanted the comfort of a stout castle around himself as soon as possible. Surely, he thought, someone civilized dwelt hereabouts, hidden in the next wooded valley or over yonder ridge.

Onkyl was slim, with fair (almost white), long, flowing hair and a sweeping moustache of the same hue. His eyes were a warm brown, and his

clothes (as much as he could keep them) elegantly fashionable—which at the time meant hose with low pointed shoes and cross-garters that were worn under a long, embroidered tunic with dagged sleeves and an overcloak.

Telarn Erren Rayburton
(-51 DR-43 DR)
The tall, long-haired, burly son of Onkyl was almost as deadly a warrior as he thought he was. He rose to lead the defenses of the Rayburton families while his father and uncle grew ever stouter, and spent more and more time counting coins and plotting ways for the Rayburtons to grow richer. Telarn was quick to anger and even swifter with his favored weapon: a broadsword engraved with the black hawkdragon crest of the Rayburton family. (This icon was the result of a drunken Rayburton seeing a wyvern. This beast has a hawk's beak and feathered head and wings, but the forked tongue, scaled body, heavy claws, and reptilian tail of a dragon.)

Telarn liked to wear velvet doublets and gold earrings, and he had cold blue-green eyes, bad teeth, shoulder-length brown hair, and a scar on one forearm that he was very proud of (most of his doublets had slit sleeves to display it). Strangely, the tale of how he acquired this mark of honor (a dragon's talon as he slew it, the flung blade of an orc as he slaughtered twenty snouters singlehanded, or the dagger of an evil sorceress whose spells he'd broken through just before he kissed her into submission) changed from time to time.

Endeir Falconhand
(-46 DR—44 DR)
This close-mouthed, always calm huntsman and Rayburton retainer, this ancestor of Florin Falconhand of the Knights of Myth Drannor had hair and eyes of steel gray, and was an expert archer. Once the Rayburtons arrived in the future Cormyr, his longbow was seldom out of his hand.

Endeir always wore tall leather boots, dark green breeches and tunic, and leather gauntlets—and his arms (a white falcon with claws outstretched to strike on a dusty blue field) could be seen on a sash of dusty blue stretched diagonally across his chest.

"The falcon," as he was known, was tall, broad-shouldered, quiet, and always alert. Whenever one of the Rayburton brothers thought of some matter of defense, provisions, hunting, or scouting, Endeir was at their elbow, having already thought of it and dealt with the need, either personally or through the dozen huntsmen he commanded (whom the seven armsmen Onkyl kept guarding the Rayburton wives and daughters were frankly afraid of).

Relve Turcassan
(-46 DR—38 DR)
This cold-eyed warlord was the most capable human battle leader in Cormyr at the founding of the realm; he rose to prominence on merit, not because his family had wealth or influence with the Obarskyrs. Quiet and aloof from feuds and the drunken brawling so many of Cormyrian warriors (particularly the Rayburtons) were prone to, Relve was a competent bladesman and a good tactician, always foreseeing details that had to be attended to and dealing with them before crises developed. (He alone always posted sentries—deployed so each guard could be seen by others, and a man overcome before he could cry alarm could thus still warn the camp.) Relve learned iron control; few ever saw him lose his temper. Short, he wore a close-trimmed black beard and moustache, and a catlike smile. He also possessed flowing black hair and pale hazel—almost mauve—eyes.

Orndar Oulamn Merendil
(-14 DR-29 DR)
Swashbuckling, handsome, and the most hot-tempered of the human warlords when Cormyr was founded, Orndar came alone from the Vilhon Reach and rose rapidly in influence among the men of the Wolf Woods because of his reckless—and successful—conduct in battle. A deadly swordsman whom most men openly feared, he fascinated many Cormyrian ladies.

Orndar stood just a shade over 5 feet tall; had long, curly black hair and a moustache to match; pale brown eyes; a very hairy chest (usually prominently displayed in the open-fronted silk shirts of flame orange, vivid green, sky blue, or rich purple that he wore); and had a habit of humming. He was seldom without his curved saber, his vivid red sash, and a wine goblet in his hand—though he never seemed to show the effects of too much drink.

THE TALE OF THE JEWELS

An unknown Rayburton ally or kinsman came to the Rayburtons from overseas about a decade after the founding of Cormyr, fleeing trouble elsewhere (possibly Impiltur, and probably as the result of a theft that gained him the treasure he brought with him).

This forgotten man took shelter with Belmer Rayburton, which almost certainly proved to be a fatal mistake—he soon disappeared forever. It seems likely that Belmer murdered him and dragged his body out into the woods to be devoured by forest creatures in order to gain possession of two large and heavy chests of cut and polished gemstones the man had brought with him.

It's certain that Belmer's brother Onkyl learned of the hoard soon after Belmer disposed of its owner (or the man disappeared for some other reason), though given his character and quiet despair over family finances at the time, it's unlikely Onkyl took part in the disappearance of the gem-bringer.

It is almost certain that Onkyl suspected, or was told, what Belmer had done, for he hid a sealed letter where his son would be sure to find it after his death (and not before), detailing "my brief glimpse of the hoard: two goodly chests, the one holding two or three fistfuls of black sapphires[1] atop as many red tears[2], all upon a bed of nigh a thousand sapphires as blue as the sky when 'tis clear. The other chest was brimful with rubies, again a thousand or so." The letter spoke of the hoard "in the grasp of my brother Belmer," and that "You, my son" (Onkyl's son Telarn) "deserve it much more than bloody Belmer ever did—see that you claim it, and prosper beyond the rough lives Belmer and I forged for ourselves."

When monsters and raiding brigands pressed the fledgling realm hard, and the war-leaders Relve Turcassan and Orndar Merendil grew desperate for weapons and hireswords to defend Cormyr, they came to Belmer demanding funds. Given Belmer's tightfistedness and surly character, it's unlikely they'd have turned in his direction had they not known (or suspected) he possessed great wealth that he'd clearly lacked in earlier days.

It's evident from the few writings I was allowed to see in the Royal Court Records in Suzail that Turcassan, Merendil, and Endeir Falconhand, as Rayburton retainers and huntsmen on the one hand, and Belmer, on the other, had a violent disagreement. Though undescribed, it resulted in Falconhand's leaving the service of Belmer and being taken on by Onkyl; the deaths of both Rayburton armsmen and some warriors of the realm under the command of Merendil and Turcassan; the wounding of Belmer Rayburton, Turcassan, and Merendil; and a widening feud that was only kept from open butchery by Onkyl Rayburton turning on his brother and demanding peace—or he'd reveal a "secret Belmer holds dear, and would fain keep so."

In my view, Falconhand revealed the existence of the hoard to Turcassan and Merendil, or at least was suspected by his master of doing so after they learned of it somehow. Moreover, I judge that Onkyl had grown to fear and hate his brother; Belmer is said by several sources to have grown "ruled by his suspicion of all men, especially newcomers to the realm" in his later years. This suspicion might well have been born of the fear of losing his hoard gnawing at him.

Certainly Onkyl's threat to reveal a secret can only have concerned the treasure, as Belmer had openly—and even, it seems, proudly—engaged in swindles, philandering, slayings, and the deliberately taking on of debts he never had any intention of repaying (to weaken the lenders and thus give him a hold over them, for he seems never to have been all that short of coin). It seems hard to conceive of another secret such a man would fear being revealed, save perhaps treachery against the realm.

Some writers descended from Merendil and Turcassan wrote a few decades later of family beliefs that dark plots and repeated woundings by night assailants that made miserable the last days of both warlords were the work of "human dogs hired by Belmer," and it seems clear that the rancor between all concerned only ended with their deaths.

It also seems clear that Telarn found most or all of the jewels, because his two sons Rauril ("Rory") and Chelesmer both recorded in private diaries being (separately) shown "beneath father's bed, that takes four strong armsmen to lift, a stone with a ring that can be lifted, to reveal a chamber below. In it was a bed made of all of jewels, with the bones of our dead mother laid out upon them, at peace yet grown all over with mold, and hideously shrunken in."

We know from records kept by others that upon Telarn's death, both brothers hastened to put guards around his bedchamber—opposing forces that came to sword blows before Rory and Chelesmer arrived and curtly put an end to the hostilities.

They seemed to have warily joined forces together to move the bed and lift the stone—and "shrieked and shouted like madmen, accusing each other of all manner of vile and impossible crimes, spitting, foaming, and clawing with fingers when we wrested their blades away" after the chamber beneath was found to be empty of all but dust and the decaying remnants of a collapsed bedframe according to one nearby source.

Rory seems to have gone on to become a grim, brawling, self-reliant man, but the rest of Chelesmer's life was consumed by an endless search for their mother's body and the jewels.

Both men left writings for their children to read after their passings that mention the hoard but make it clear that neither brother knows its whereabouts—and that both suspect the other of having hidden it away and then lost it, or access to it, in some calamity they dared not reveal.

Whatever became of the jewels—and all trace of the chamber that held the shrouded corpse of Jaless Rayburton, the wife of Telarn, has vanished. No man alive today is able to identify even the fortress that held it with certainty. It seems clear that Rayburton kin and other treasure-seekers have often searched for the hoard since, but never found it ... unless the finder somehow spirited his find away out of Cormyr without anyone being any the wiser.

1. Described in *Volo's Guide to All Things Magical,* these rare gems are highly valued by mages for their protective magical uses.

2. Ye may learn particulars of these gemstones in the same source; priests prize them highly for healing purposes.

VS. DUERGAR

by Rich Baker

"A duergar warrior is every bit as tough as a hill dwarf or mountain dwarf—and he's a lot sneakier, too. He's absolutely ruthless, relentless, and sees no reason why he should give you an even chance in a fight. If you've got to go up against the duergar, watch your back and bring lots of healing."

—Barak Rockfist, dwarven warrior

The duergar are the evil antithesis of hill dwarves and mountain dwarves. While they share most of the abilities and resistances of other dwarves, they also have several innate magical powers and special defenses unavailable to their kinsmen. Duergar cities and strongholds are dark fortresses of toil and despair that lie hidden in the Underdark.

Like the drow, duergar war parties and scouts are occasionally encountered in the deepest portions of surface world dungeons and cavern systems. Duergar are determined and stealthy adversaries. Worse yet, most of the duergar you'll encounter in these parties are skilled fighters, rogues, and wizards.

VS DUERGAR TIPS

- Use spells such as *see invisibility* or *invisibility purge* to defeat invisible opponents.
- Take advantage of your superior movement rate.
- Summon monsters or animals with abilities such as Scent or Blindsight to root out invisible foes before they surprise you.
- Use *daylight* to hit duergar with heavy competence penalties on most combat rolls.

PREPARATION

You're not likely to encounter parties of duergar warriors or rogues until you have some experience under your belt. That's good, because you'll need it. The special abilities of the duergar include the ability to become invisible once per day; the ability to *enlarge* itself once per day; and immunity to phantasms, magical and alchemical poisons, and paralysis. In addition, they share the standard dwarven abilities: darkvision, stonecunning, and saving throw bonuses against spells.

Invisibility is a tricky power to plan for. Few monsters possess this ability at low level, but as your character gains power, you'll "see" more and more adversaries who have this edge. Learning how to counter *invisibility* is key to surviving fights with duergar, and darned useful in general.

Invisibility is especially dangerous when combined with a sneak attack, and many duergar are rogues. The last thing you want is a group of duergar rogues appearing around your characters, making sneak attacks as they break their *invisibility*.

Here are some tips to help you avoid such situations:

Blind-Fight: Consider picking up the Blind-Fight feat. It takes away the automatic sneak attack by negating your loss of a Dex modifier to AC when attacked by an invisible opponent. If the duergar isn't a rogue, you'll still have the benefit of re-rolling miss chances when you strike back.

Even if you don't know how to fight blind, you might have companions or allies who do—especially animals. The Scent ability allows animals such as wolves to detect the presence and general location of invisible creatures. That can provide you with an early warning. A druid's animal companion might be your best sentry against invisible opponents.

See Invisibility* and *Invisibility Purge: Learn or memorize the spells *see invisibility* or *invisibility purge*. If you're unwilling to devote a spell slot to a spell that counters a condition you might not even encounter in the course of an adventure, then commit these spells to scrolls or carry them as expendable magic items. That way, they're not cluttering up your spell allocation, but you have them if you need them. (It's a good idea to carry a lot of generally useful spells this way. Plus, it's a great bargain, especially if you scribe them yourself.)

The other abilities of duergar are useful, but they're not likely to significantly tip the scales in a fight. Watch out for their *enlarge* ability, since it basically confers a +1 Strength bonus per level of your duergar opponent. (They cast their spell-like abilities as sorcerers of twice their character level, minimum 3rd level.) If the duergar know you're coming, they'll pump up for the fight by using *enlarge* to increase their Strength scores. You can negate this with *dispel magic*.

TACTICS

Don't let them surprise you: If you think you might be at risk of encountering duergar, be ready to detect and fight invisible opponents through some of the preparations described previously.

Know your enemy: Duergar possess a couple of unusual immunities—they're immune to phantasms, magical and alchemical poisons, and paralysis. That means spells like *ghoul touch, phantasmal killer,* and *weird* won't work, but you can still use spells like *hold person, invisibility,* and *silent image*.

Duergar hate bright light and suffer a -2 penalty to just about everything they do in daylight or its equivalent. That means you should carry scrolls or wands of *daylight,* or prepare the spell if you prefer. A number of monsters dislike bright light, so you'll find ways to use this effect in a number of situations.

Finally, you might possess an unexpected advantage over the typical duergar—they only have a base movement of 20 feet, and they're often armored, reducing their movement rate even more. If your base movement is 30 feet or more, you can outrun them; a barbarian or monk runs circles around a typical duergar. Your enemies should have a hard time getting away from you if you don't want them to, and they won't catch you if you decide to cut and run.

THE STONELORD

by Monte Cook · illustrated by Mike Vilardi

Earth and Stone, heed our call,
Smite our foes, make them fall.
Grant us wisdom, strength, and heart,
Teach us your lore, your faith, your art.
From the *Book of Steadfast Stone*

Dwarves know more secrets about stone than anyone else. They live and die among the stones, and the earth whispers to them—or at least to select individuals. These special dwarves are known as stonelords, or occasionally rockbrothers and rocksisters. They use their connection with the earth to draw from the infinite reserves of power within it to help them perform amazing feats.

Fighters are the most common stonelords, although dwarven paladins and rangers adopt the mantle as well. Though uncommon, dwarven rogues, clerics, and even the occasional wizard or sorcerer become stonelords.

NPC stonelords work in dwarven communities as protectors and leaders. Occasionally, they work in groups, but even then their varied backgrounds and chosen powers make them all very different.

THE STONELORD — HIT DIE D8

Lvl	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	*Earth's Blood*
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Stone power
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	*Stone shape*
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Stone power
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	*Meld into stone*
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Stone power
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	*Stone tell*
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Stone power
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	*Earthquake*
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Stone power

Lvl: The level of the stonelord.

Attack Bonus: The stonelord's attack bonus, added to the character's normal attack bonus.

Fort. Save: The save bonus on Fortitude saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Ref. Save: The save bonus on Reflex saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Will Save: The save bonus on Will saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Special: Level-dependent class features.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a stonelord, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack: +5 or better
Craft (stoneworking) ranks: 6
Spellcraft ranks: 3
Race: Dwarf
Feats: Endurance
Language: Terran

Special: To become a stonelord, a dwarf must undergo an arduous ritual involving immersion in sacred loam, long fasting periods deep underground, and the ingestion of 1,000 gp worth of powdered gemstones. The gem type chosen is then the stonelord's totem gem, and she must carry that type of stone with her at all times to access the spell-like abilities she gains as a stonelord.

CLASS SKILLS

Skill Points at Each Level: 2+Int modifier

The stonelord's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Climb (Dex)
Craft (Dex)
Knowledge (any) (Int)
Profession (Wis)
Spot (Wis)

CLASS FEATURES

• **Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Stonelords are proficient with simple weapons, but no type of armor or shield.

• ***Earth's Blood:*** Once per day, the stonelord can heal her own wounds using a clump of mud. This ability heals 1d8 + class level hit points. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

• **Stone power:** At every other level, the stonelord can choose one from the following list of stone powers. No power can be chosen more than once.

Earth's Strength: Once per day, the stonelord grants herself a boost to her Strength as if she was affected by a *bull's strength* spell for an hour. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

Earth's Endurance: Once per day, the stonelord grants herself a boost to her Constitution as if she was affected by an *endurance* spell for an hour. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

Earthgrip: Once per day, the stonelord can cast *hold monster* on any target on the ground, using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

Gravity: Once per day, the stonelord can cast *slow* as a spell-like ability using her class level as the level of the caster. Using this ability is a standard action.

Earth Magic: Once per day, a spell cast by a stonelord (assuming she can cast spells) is considered maximized as if prepared with the Maximize Spell feat, although the spell's level is unaffected. The spell's level cannot be greater than the class level of the stonelord. This is a supernatural ability; using it counts as a free action.

Earth Shadows: Once per day per class level, the stonelord can create a figment of a Medium-size earth elemental that appears in a flanking position on the other side of the stonelord's opponent for one round. This spell-like ability allows the stonelord to make flanking attacks (+2 to hit, can make a sneak attack if such ability is available) against that opponent during that round. Using this ability is a free action.

Earth Power: Once per day, all melee attacks made by the stonelord in a single round gain a +2 attack bonus and a +2d6 damage bonus. This is a supernatural ability and using it counts as a free action.

Stoneskin: Once per day, the stonelord grants herself skin like stone as if she was affected by a *stoneskin* spell, using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability and using it is a standard action.

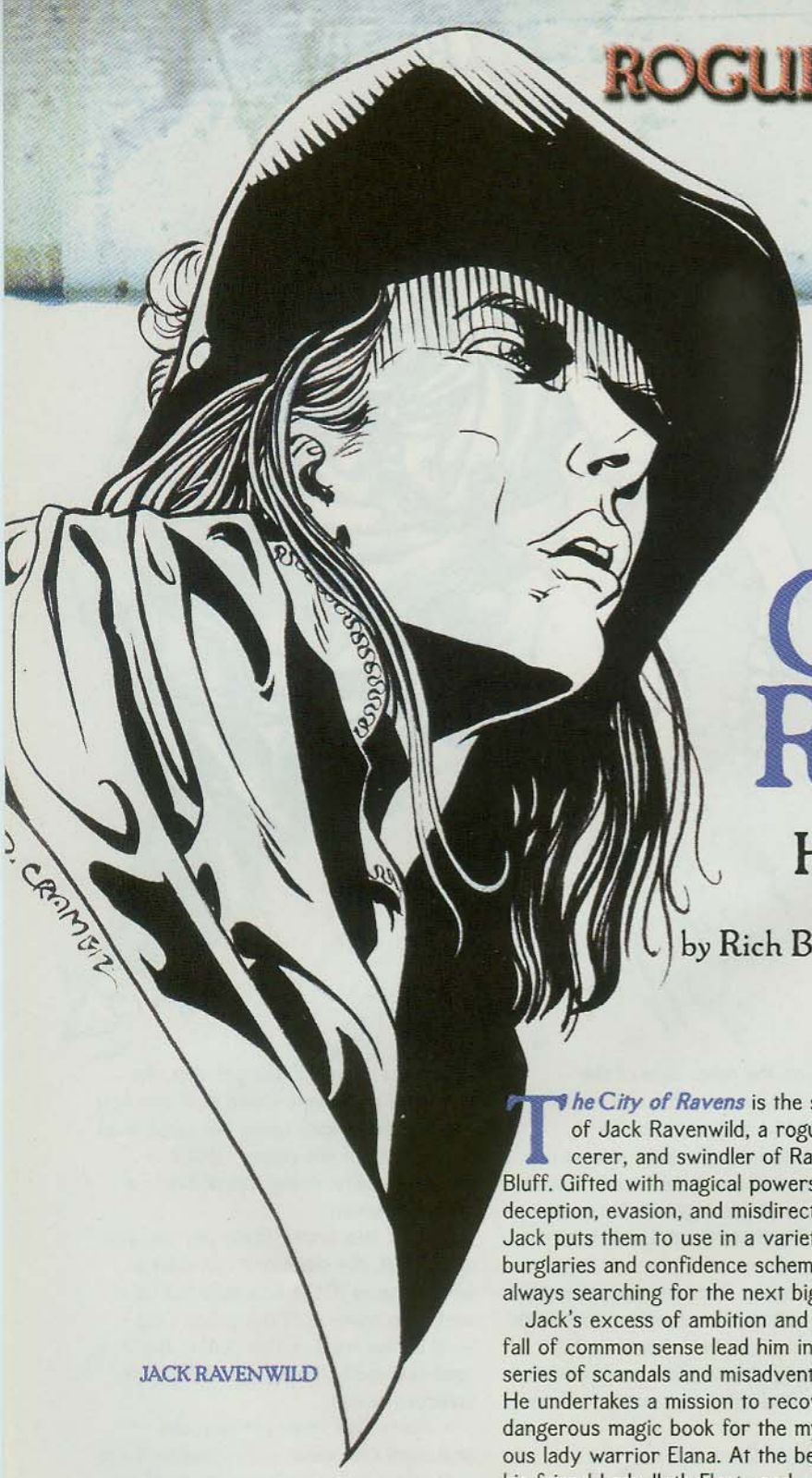
Summon Earth Elemental: Once per day, the stonelord can summon a small earth elemental as if she cast *summon monster III*, using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

• ***Stone Shape:*** Once per day, the stonelord can shape stone as if she cast a *stone shape* spell using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

• ***Meld into Stone:*** Once per day per class level, the stonelord can merge with stone as if she was affected by a *meld into stone* spell using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

• ***Stone Tell:*** Once per day, the stonelord can speak with stone as if she cast *stone tell* using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action.

• ***Earthquake:*** Once per day, the stonelord can invoke an earthquake as if she cast *earthquake* using her class level as the level of the caster. This is a spell-like ability. Using this ability is a standard action. D



JACK RAVENWILD

CITY OF RAVENS

Heroes of Ravens Bluff

by Rich Baker · illustrated by Dennis Cramer

The City of Ravens is the story of Jack Ravenwild, a rogue, sorcerer, and swindler of Ravens Bluff. Gifted with magical powers of deception, evasion, and misdirection, Jack puts them to use in a variety of burglaries and confidence schemes, always searching for the next big score.

Jack's excess of ambition and shortfall of common sense lead him into a series of scandals and misadventures. He undertakes a mission to recover a dangerous magic book for the mysterious lady warrior Elana. At the behest of his friend Lady Ilyth Fleetwood, Jack involves himself in the great Game of Masks and promptly stumbles into a sinister conspiracy. Finally, Jack conceives a plan to rob a Red Wizard of the legendary treasure of the Guilder's Vault, a hoard hidden in the dwarven ruins under Ravens Bluff.

In-between Jack's plots and schemes, the city's Hawk Knights suspect Jack of treason, a powerful necromancer becomes his mortal enemy, and an evil duplicate stalks and humiliates the few friends he has left. Jack's difficulties culminate in a confrontation with the most dangerous enemy of Ravens Bluff: the warlord Myrkyssa Jelan and the stunning revelation of the source of his magical prowess.

All in all, it's a typical story in the City of Ravens.

While *The City of Ravens* is set in Ravens Bluff, home of the RPGA's LIVING CITY campaign, you don't need to be a RPGA member to enjoy the story. The city is a classic fantasy city in the tradition of Waterdeep, Lankhmar, or Sanctuary. LIVING CITY characters are used sparingly. In fact, the four characters described in this article: Jack, Anders, Zandria, and Tharzon, were all created for *The City of Ravens.* But, if you are an RPGA member, you'll enjoy the attention to detail in place names, events, and supporting characters that appear in the story.

JACK RAVENWILD

Male human, 4th-level Rogue, 10th-level Sorcerer

Strength	10 (+0)	**Fort. Save**	+4
Dexterity	19 (+4)	**Ref. Save**	+11
Constitution	11 (+0)	**Will Save**	+6
Intelligence	12 (+1)	**Alignment**	CN
Wisdom	7 (–2)	**Speed**	30 ft.
Charisma	16 (+3)	**Size**	M (5' 8")

Armor Class	19	**Melee Attack**	+8/+3
Hit Points	44	**Ranged Attack**	+12/+7

Special: Sneak attack (+2d6); evasion; uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); proficient with simple weapons, hand crossbow, sap, shortbow, short sword, and light armor.

Skills: Appraise +4, Balance +13, Bluff +8, Climb +7, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +11, Hide +11, Intimidate +8, Jump +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +9, Pick Pocket +9, Scry +7, Search +4, Spellcraft +5, Spot +2, Swim +2, Tumble +9.

Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Finesse (dagger).

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: *+1 chain shirt, +1 rapier, ring of stone, +3 black mithril dagger of subtlety.*

Spells known (6/7/7/7/5/3): 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*change self, charm person, detect secret doors, jump, magic missile;* 2nd—*darkvision, invisibility, knock, scare;* 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, lightning bolt;* 4th—*dimension door, scrying;* 5th—*improved blink.*

Jack Ravenwild grew up as a guttersnipe in the rough quarter of Ravens Bluff. He is a small, wiry man with quick reflexes, outstanding balance, and an acrobat's agility. Armed with a quick wit, sharp ambition, feckless daring, and a distinct lack of common sense, he thinks he is much more intelligent and charming than he really is. He is a likable fellow and good company—as long as one doesn't mistake courtly manners and precise speech for signs of good breeding.

Jack would much rather deceive or escape an opponent than involve himself in a physical confrontation. He resorts to lethal methods only when it cannot be helped. His aversion to bloodshed should not, however, be mistaken for a compassionate or altruistic inclination; Jack simply cannot bring himself to believe that anything is so serious as to risk his life over. Humiliating an enemy is a far better solution.

By trade, Jack is a thief and scoundrel. The origin of his talent for sorcery is a mystery to him. He simply thinks of a trick that would be useful—turning invisible, for instance—and concentrates on it, experimenting with words and gestures and acts of will until he solves the puzzle and learns the spell.

Ambitious, untrustworthy, and insincere, Jack Ravenwild is a compulsive liar who cultivates dozens of imaginary personas, assigning himself wealth, prestige, and station so that he can mingle with the upper crust and swindle his way to a life of luxury. Despite this, he's loyal to his friends (to a point) and generous with his gold (after he takes care of himself). He does nothing by half measures, which means that his mistakes are epic blunders and his successes astonish all involved in their scope and brilliance. Jack is a lot of things, but the one thing he's not is boring.

New Magic Item

+3 black mithral dagger of subtlety

This dagger possesses a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls in normal combat, but when used in a sneak attack, its bonus increases to +6. Its construction (black mithral) provides it with the curious property of retaining its attack and damage bonus in antimagic or dead magic areas.

New Magic Item

Ring of Stone

This device appears to be a small ornament fashioned from some smooth, soft rock such as soapstone. Blue flecks of harder material can be seen upon closer examination. The ring of stone allows the wearer to cast *stoneskin* on herself once per day as a 4th-level sorcerer. The wearer can cast *bull's strength* on herself, the effects of which last for up to 10 minutes once per day. Also, the *ring of stone* provides a +2 luck bonus to saving throws against petrification effects such as the touch of a cockatrice, the gaze of a medusa, or a *flesh to stone* spell.

New Spell

Improved Blink

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 7
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round/level (D)

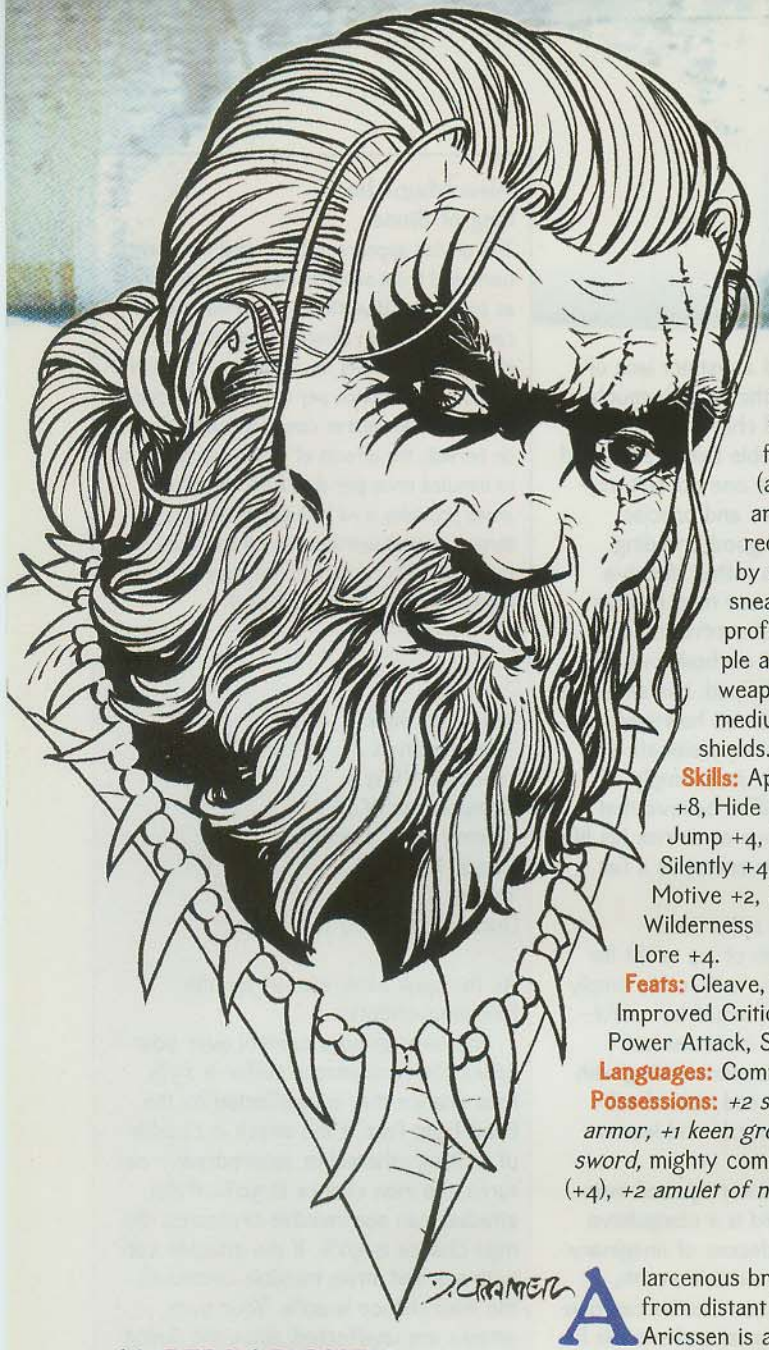
As the spell *blink,* except for the following effects:

You have greater control over your *blinks.* Physical attacks suffer a 75% miss chance that is unaffected by the Blind-Fight feat. If the attack is capable of striking ethereal or incorporeal creatures, the miss chance is 50%. If the attacker can see invisible creatures, the miss chance is 50%. If the attacker can both see and strike invisible creatures, the miss chance is 20%. Your own attacks are unaffected, since the timing of the *blinks* is controlled. Individually targeted spells have a 75% chance of failure unless the attacker can target invisible, ethereal creatures.

You can step through (but not see through) solid objects up to 10 feet thick with no chance that you become material. Your speed is unaffected.

You can see and attack ethereal creatures without penalty.

If you are attacked by a foe you cannot see or react to (any foe who would deny you your Dexterity bonus to AC) the miss chances are reduced to those of a normal *blink* spell (50%, unless your opponent can see invisible or strike ethereal foes, which reduces the miss chance to 20%, or no miss chance for both).



ANDERS ARICSSEN

Male human, 7th-level Barbarian, 2nd-level Rogue

Strength	18 (+4)	Fort. Save	+7
Dexterity	12 (+1)	Ref. Save	+5
Constitution	15 (+2)	Will Save	+3
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	13 (+1)	Speed	40 ft.
Charisma	9 (–1)	Size	(6' 4")
Hit Points	81	Melee Attack	+12/+7
Armor Class	18	Ranged Attack	+9/+4

Special: Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); rage 2/day (add +4 to Strength and Constitution, reduce Armor Class by 2 points); evasion; sneak attack (+1d6); proficient with all simple and martial weapons, small and medium armor, and shields.

Skills: Appraise +3, Climb +8, Hide +4, Intimidate +6, Jump +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Ride +4, Sense Motive +2, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +4.

Feats: Cleave, Endurance, Improved Critical (greatsword), Power Attack, Sunder.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: *+2 studded leather armor, +1 keen greatsword, +1 short sword,* mighty composite longbow (+4), *+2 amulet of natural armor.*

A larcenous brawler and thug from distant Luskan, Anders Aricssen is a swordsman of heroic proportions who often turns his prowess to distinctly unheroic acts. The Northman stands nearly 6½ feet in height and possesses a long, rangy frame of remarkable strength and hardiness. His golden hair is normally pulled back in a ponytail, and an unkempt beard of the same hue surrounds his otherwise handsome face. Anders is Jack Ravenwild's principal accomplice and partner in crime, making up in sheer enthusiasm and energy for the inevitable oversights in Jack's plans.

Anders came to Ravens Bluff two years ago as its enemy, marching under the banner of the Warlord Myrkyssa Jelan as a mercenary. When the Warlord's horde was defeated at the Battle of Fire River, Anders escaped by throwing off his arms and insignia, and slipping into the city with a flood of refugees. At first he planned to stay only long enough to scrape together enough money to set out again, but Anders found he had a liking for the life of a thief. He hides his past carefully, since the city authorities would probably hang him for being a spy if they ever came across evidence that he'd fought for Jelan.

Like Jack, Anders prefers not to murder those who get in his way, although he doesn't shrink from battle. He prefers to use his fists or the flat of his blade to render foes unconscious. Anders's directness and barbaric appearance lead many people to take him for thick-headed, but he is smarter than he looks, and he possesses twice the common sense that his diminutive partner Jack Ravenwild displays. For instance, Anders knows better than to trust Jack when the time comes to split the loot.

In his day, Anders has been an adventurer, mercenary, brigand, burglar, thief, and thug. Despite his considerable talents, he is content to simply drift from day to day, falling in with whatever schemes his companions happen to entertain at that moment.

ZANDRIA

Female human, 12th-level Evoker

Strength	11 (+0)	Fort. Save	+6
Dexterity	13 (+1)	Ref. Save	+5
Constitution	14 (+2)	Will Save	+8
Intelligence	18 (+4)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	10 (+0)	Speed	30 ft.
Charisma	15 (+2)	Size	M (5'4")

Armor Class	20	Base Attack	+6/+1
Hit Points	55	Melee Attack	+7/+2

Special: Evocation specialist: prepare one bonus spell per spell level per day, +2 bonus to Spellcraft checks to learn Evocation spells; barred school: Conjuration; proficient with the club, dagger, heavy crossbow, light crossbow, and quarterstaff.

Skills: Alchemy +15, Concentration +15, Craft (jewelsmith) +8, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Intimidate +4, Listen +4, Scry +11, Search +4, Speak Language (Ignan), Spellcraft +15, Spot +4.

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Infernal, Ignan, Orc.

Possessions: *boots of levitation, +4 bracers of armor, cloak of the bat, potion of cure serious wounds, +3 ring of protection, +1 quarterstaff of thunder, wand of fireball* (maximized, caster level 10), *wand of magic missile* (maximized, caster level 7).

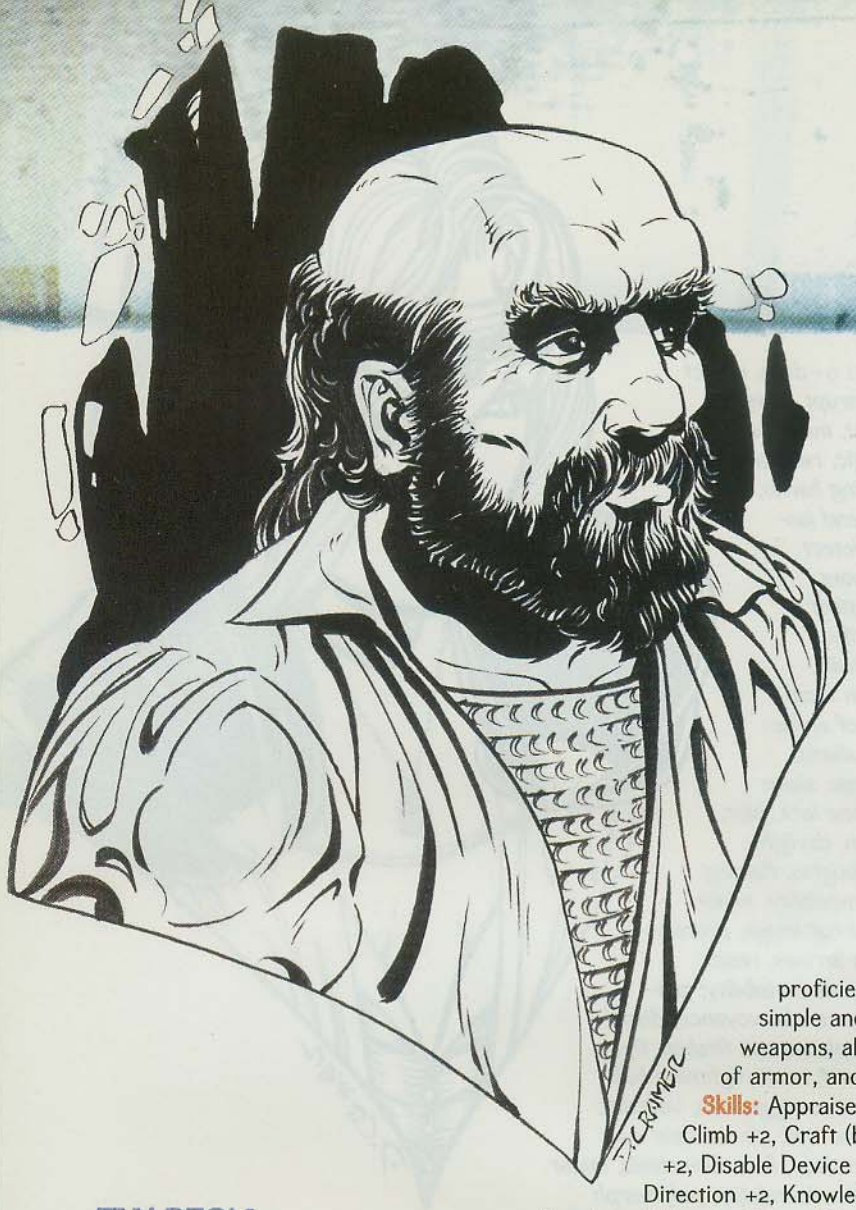
Spells (5/6/6/6/5/4/3): 0—*detect magic, flare, light* (x2), *mage hand;* 1st—*burning hands, detect secret doors, feather fall, magic missile* (x2), *shield;* 2nd—*darkvision, flaming sphere, invisibility, protection from arrows, resist elements, see invisibility;* 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, fireball, fly, invisibility* (silenced), *lightning bolt;* 4th—*dimension door, fire shield, magic missile* (maximized), *stoneskin, wall of fire;* 5th—*cone of cold, dominate person, seeming, wall of force;* 6th—*fireball* (maximized), *globe of invulnerability, mass haste.*

Spellbook: 0—*daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, flare, light, mage hand, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, erase, feather fall, identify, magic missile, protection from evil, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image, sleep;* 2nd—*arcane lock, blur, darkvision, daylight, detect thoughts, flaming sphere, invisibility, minor image, mirror image, protection from arrows, resist elements, see invisibility;* 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, displacement, fireball, fly, gust of wind, haste, lightning bolt, nondetection, suggestion, vampiric touch, wind wall;* 4th—*arcane eye, dimension door, fear, fire shield, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph other, scrying, stoneskin, wall of fire;* 5th—*cone of cold, dismissal, dominate person, hold monster, seeming, telekinesis, wall of force;* 6th—*circle of death, globe of invulnerability, mass haste, mass suggestion, true seeing.*

Zandria challenges the stereotype of the Red Wizards—she isn't old, bald, male, or mad with the hunger for magical power. She is, however, an arrogant, ambitious genius who does not suffer fools nor brook rivals. She is tall and slender, with a short-cropped shock of red hair and a beautiful face set in a scowl of irritation at whatever circumstances are currently hindering her. Her temper is legendary, and her eyes spark like living fire when her anger flares.

Zandria is quick to strike when a situation threatens to become violent. She lashes out with the most destructive spells at her command and ends fights before they can start. Her reputation for hard measures is spreading and deters more than a few would-be assailants.

Like many other low-ranking Red Wizards, Zandria spends a great deal of her time abroad, searching for knowledge and power in ancient treasure troves. She carefully surrounds herself with competent and trustworthy allies, treating them fairly to win the loyalty of her adventuring companions. Zandria attacks the challenges of a hidden treasure or dangerous situation with hard-nosed pragmatism, but she generally respects the rights of others to their property and prosperity. She isn't a murderer or robber, which is more than can be said for most who wear the red robes.



THARZON

Male dwarf, 4th-level Fighter, 4th-level Rogue

Strength	15 (+2)	Fort. Save	+8
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Ref. Save	+7
Constitution	17 (+3)	Will Save	+5
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	12 (+2)	Speed	20 ft.
Charisma	8 (–1)	Size	M (4' 5")

Armor Class	20	Melee Attack	+7/+2
Hit Points	67	Ranged Attack	+7/+2

Special: Darkvision 60 ft.; stonecunning; +2 racial bonus to saves against poison; +2 racial bonus to saves against spells and spell-like effects; +1 racial bonus to attack rolls against orcs and goblinoids; +4 dodge bonus to AC against giants; +2 bonus to Appraise and Craft checks related to stone or metal; sneak attack (+2d6); evasion; uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); proficient with simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

Skills: Appraise +4, Climb +2, Craft (brewing) +2, Disable Device +7, Intuit Direction +2, Knowledge (local) +3, Listen +1, Move Silently +2, Open Lock +7, Profession (miner) +3, Search +7, Spot +2, Use Rope +2.

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Languages: Common.

Possessions: *+1 chain shirt of shadow, +1 small steel shield, +2 dwarven waraxe,* light crossbow, five *+3 bolts* (twenty non-magic bolts).

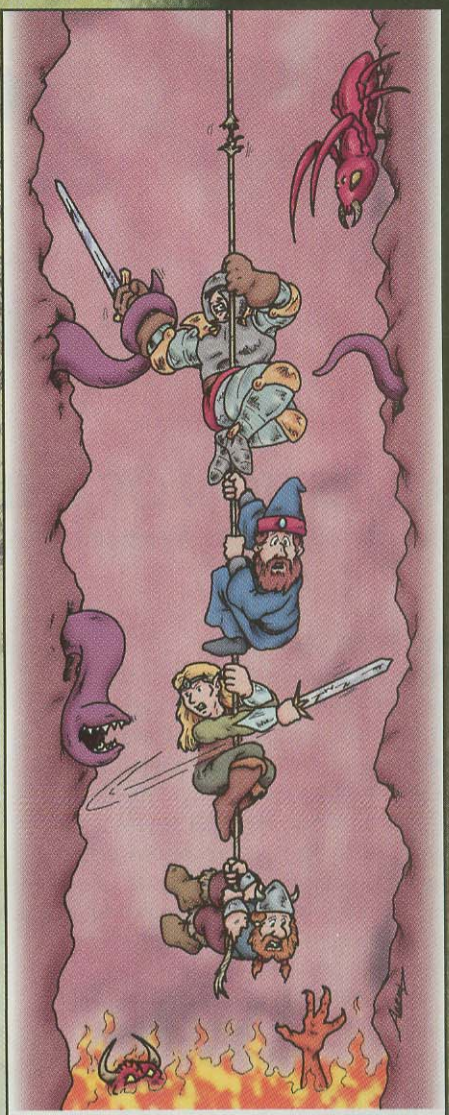
A master tunneler, Tharzon is renowned for his knowledge of the city's sewers, vaults, and underways, including the ruins of the old dwarven citadel Sarbreen. Where other thieves rely on agility and daring to pull off second-story burglaries, Tharzon relies on patience and hard work, burrowing his way into the cellars of the wealthy to loot their most secure treasuries. Like many dwarves, he is taciturn and suspicious, slow to give his friendship but unflinching in loyalty once he does. He is short and stocky even by dwarven standards, with a short beard of wiry black that seems perpetually powdered by dust and mortar.

Tharzon is ninety years old and has lived in Ravens Bluff for most of that time. His great-great-grandfather was a merchant of old Sarbreen, fortunately away from the city on business when the City of the Hammer was sacked. Tharzon's grandfather and father grew up listening to tales of their family's lost wealth. They returned to the ruins of Sarbreen in the hopes of recovering their lost gold when human settlers founded Ravens Bluff. Decades of poorly rewarded labor left Tharzon with little patience for the old stories of Sarbreen's wealth. He's given up on recovering his family's hoard, and now seeks Sarbreenar gold wherever it lies—even in the counting-houses and vaults of the city's merchant-nobles. Most of Tharzon's kin revere their dead forefathers, holding the burial sites of ancient dwarves as the most sacred locations. Tharzon's attitude is much more practical and pragmatic. Figuring that most tombs will wind up being looted sooner or later, he's decided that his ancestors would rather have their funerary wealth fall into the hands of an appreciative dwarven expert than some pillaging human graverobber. He's cynical enough to recognize his own rationalizations, but too pragmatic to really care.

When leads on hidden treasures are thin, Tharzon spends his time behind the bar of the Smoke Wyrm, a taphouse he bought into after a particularly good score. His signature brew, Old Smokey, is renowned among the lower-class dwarves of Ravens Bluff.

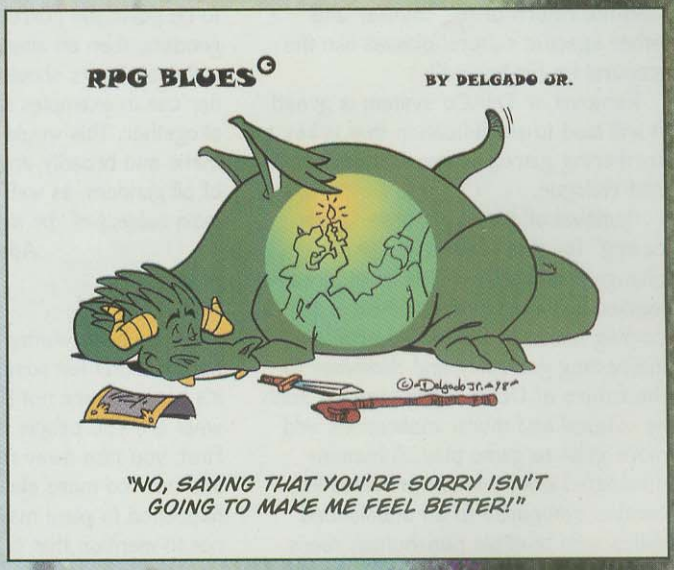
Dragon Mirth

The Unspeakable Oaf
by John Kovalic
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?
I SEE THE DUNGEON OF UNSPEAKABLE EVIL FINALLY GOT A PR AGENCY...



"I WOULD NOW LIKE TO OPEN THE FLOOR TO SUGGESTIONS REGARDING OUR COMPANY'S FUTURE ACTIVITIES, IF ANY..."

"It wasn't the dragon — it was the animal rights activists!"



"NO, SAYING THAT YOU'RE SORRY ISN'T GOING TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER!"

FORUM

forum@wizards.com
"Forum," c/o *Dragon Magazine*
1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055
Include your full name and mailing address.
We'll withhold your name or print
your full address if you wish.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What house rules have you invented for your D&D game?

HE SAID, SHE SAID

Recently I obtained a copy of the newest *Player's Handbook*. I anticipated it with glee, not unlike a kid who is about to receive an ice cream cone with a triple-layer serving! I had looked forward to this new incarnation of the game since Mr. Gygax's return, thereby giving a reassuring direction to one of my favorite roleplaying games. My thoughts on the changes are both rejoiceful and antagonistic.

The unification of the class experience table is an excellent choice for purposes of simplicity and balance in a multiclass game environment!

The return of the monk and barbarian class is first rate! A small monk is an interesting choice. I will have to see how that type of character plays.

The sorcerer is a good new class. Can the return of the cavalier and other specific cultural classes like the samurai be far behind?

Removal of THACo system is great! It will lead to simplification that is key to furthering gameplay, especially combat and dialogue.

Removal of the experience "glass ceiling" for racial levels is a great change, which many DMs have already applied in the past. The rumor of forthcoming monster characters creates interesting gameplay and dilemmas for the future of D&D. Complications such as cultural and moral implications add more grist to game play. A human-dominated environment provides less conflict compared to an unbalanced milieu with multiple non-human races. Innovation and creativity of roleplaying opportunities abound in varied racial characters and cultures. Will this potential new information be part of the new *Dungeon Master's Guide, Monster Manual*, or a separate expansion book?

Why is it that some writers feel the need to confuse their writing with mixed points of view? The current use of a female and male pronouns used for some examples is disconcerting within the same article in *Dragon* or alternatively switched back and forth within character descriptions in the *Player's Handbook*. In the past, the singular use of the male descriptor was not distracting, as this was a male demographic game. The current use of a male descriptor with a female descriptor gives no consistent main subject to provide focus or flow in the writing. If you want to be politically correct and appeal to all genders, then an alternative use of neutral descriptors should be used, or gender use in examples should be eliminated altogether. This would be a better aesthetic and broadly appeal to all gamers of all genders, as well as focus on the main subject of the article or story.

Adam C. • Tucson, Az

NOT HAPPY

We have been waiting for the new edition of D&D for some time. Now that it's here, we are not happy with it! Just what are you people doing, anyway? First, you take away the specialty priests, and now no more elemental mages. What happened to plate mail and field plate, not to mention that collection of weapons we could choose from? You have gotten way off track with the fighter class. Weapon specialization has become a sad joke, a shadow of its former glory. What was done to the thief class is downright uncalled for.

Speaking of which, what did you do to the poor halfling race? They were never that small. At least they got the half-orcs to look right. Now that we are on the subject of orcs, who made Gruumsh chaotic evil? From the first printing of *Deities & Demigods* in 1979, he was always lawful evil. We hope this is a misprint to be corrected latter.

I know that the Wizards of the Coast is at least trying to be on the cutting edge of gaming evolution, but, if it works, why mess with it?

Louis Pirozzi • Jersey City, NJ

DEMON SHMEMON

The new edition of Dungeons & Dragons has really improved the roleplaying aspects as much as—if not more than—the rules. No more confusion between dwarves and gnomes; finally halflings are losing that lazy bumpkin stereotype! There are great opportunities all around to break old molds—for PCs, anyway.

There seems to be some backward evolution with the monsters. Why are the baatezu and tanar'ri back to being called devils and demons? Demon, devil, and fiend are pretty interchangeable terms. I see a lot of confusion in some gamers' futures. Plus, calling something a devil just doesn't have the same feel as saying "baatezu." It just sounds creepy and alien—and therefore cool.

No other creature has a coolness factor like a dragon. Yet, the new edition seems to have squandered the opportunity to let them grow. Why are monochromatic and metallic dragons still the standard? I thought we would see feathered wyrms, armored behemoths, and whiskered serpents.

Well, since I have not perused the *Monster Manual,* perhaps surprises are still forthcoming. The new style and options do make every critter more flexible.

The template concept rocks! The new edition is so brilliant it has to appeal to everyone from *some* angle. I am sure everyone will have their favorite part.

Casey DeWitt • Bardstown, KT
YesacV2@aol.com

HOW I STOPPED WORRYING AND LEARNED TO LOVE D&D

I never liked AD&D. In fact, I used to hate it. But that has changed, and let me explain how.

The first roleplaying game I ever played was *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* (WFRP), which I had learned about through Game Workshop's *Advanced Heroquest.* Up to that point, I always believed that roleplaying was all about miniatures moving around on a dungeon board. Mind you, that was years and years ago. Things have changed though, from the first disappointing moments when I discovered that WFRP was just a book (not a game box) to the fascinating enlightenment as the pages unfolded. I was trapped.

I started as a novice gamemaster leading a band of enthusiastic youngsters. Some of the newly established group members came from a dissolved AD&D gaming group. They found WFRP's level-free and career system to their tastes and told us all the flaws of AD&D. They had had a dictator-like Dungeon Master who apparently thought that his monsters' job was to hack players to pieces.

We played WFRP for many years, and saw TSR's AD&D as the chief competitor to WFRP. The negative criticism against AD&D made me firmly believe that it was just a silly hack-and-slash game in Disney format—totally inferior to our sophisticated game.

But the golden years ended as I heard the disturbing news Games Workshop had in store for WFRP: It was going out of production. I was devastated, and on that black day I swore never to buy any Games Workshop products ever again. But, being a consummate gamer as well as a roleplayer, I forgave them a few months later.

We played other roleplaying games over the years, but never D&D. The most noteworthy of them were *Call of Cthulhu* and *Ars Magica.*

Then I heard of about Wizards of the Coast's new edition of D&D, which surprised me. I had always thought of Wizards of the Coast as the bane of all roleplaying games, ever since they came up with their stupid card games.

I WAS EVEN MORE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT PLAYERS COULD NOW MATCH THEIR WITS AGAINST 20TH-LEVEL COMMONERS.

I got interested in the new D&D because I was looking for a game that's destined to last more than just a few years. Wizards of the Coast seemed to put much effort into making it right. When I picked up the *Player's Handbook* all doubt was gone. This game is for me!

Once I shunned its banner. Now I carry it, and I hold it high.

Rikard Fjellhaug • Bergen, Norway

ARCHPEASANTS

While thumbing through the latest incarnation of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide,* I was intrigued to find nonplayer character classes. I was even more surprised to find that players could now match their wits against 20th-level commoners. "Sorry, Bob, but that goatherd just pierced your spleen with a sharpened stick. You're dead, pally."

After the initial confusion as to why on earth the game needed archpeasants, an idea occurred to me : NPC levels + roleplaying encounters + the new experience table = a way to award noncombat awards in a systematic, accurate manner!

Example: The brilliant DM (aren't they all?) plans a scenario. The player characters must aid the village of Humble Vale, which is suffering from acute hunger after a group of Flathead Hill Ogres ravaged their granary. The nearby town of Righteous Grove has a surplus, but the Electors there loathe the timid folks of Humble Vale. Enter the PCs. The characters must overcome many obstacles to convince the Electors of Righteous Grove to sell grain to the hungry commoners of Humble Vale.

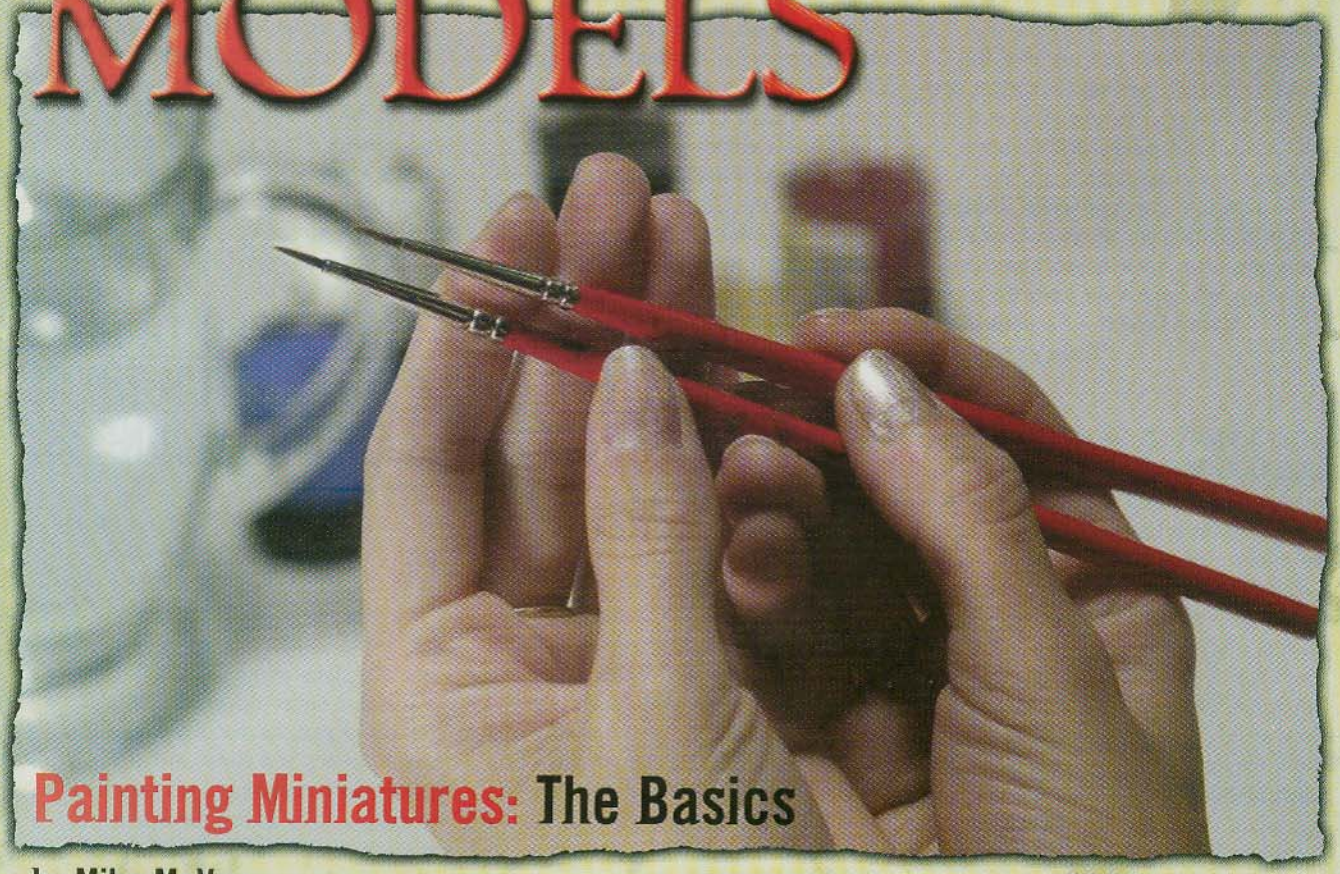
They have to get past the 2nd-level warrior at the gate, who is just itching for a fight, upon learning his wife left him for a vulgar mud gnome. After that, they must plead their case before Elector Niles Finge, a 5th-level expert, and convince him to sell a bit of his town's grain surplus at a discount to his hungry neighbors. Finally, the return trip will be stressful, as a 3rd-level noble, Road Warden Phinneas Git, will levy a highway tax in the form of the grain the party is escorting. Once again, the group has to use their roleplaying skills to avoid insulting the noble and at the same time not lose any of their precious cargo.

This is a super adventure. It has tension, drama, heroics—but no killing. Some players and GMs can't abide a module with no killing because there's no easy way to award experience if there isn't a pile of bodies in the players' wake! Fret not, camper, the new edition solves that problem. During the adventure the players meet a 2nd-level warrior (CR2), a 5th-level expert (CR5), and finally, a 3rd-level noble (CR3). In each encounter the group had to overcome the NPCs' tempers, biases, and arrogance. If they do so successfully they will have achieved their goal of saving Humble Vale. Use the handy experience table, and you can award experience for each encounter.

This, I think, is one of the greatest improvements on D&D. Characters finally have a way to advance as a *character,* not as a sword swinger, spellcaster, and so on. Progressing in levels while using roleplaying skills inevitably fleshes out a PC because the gamer is forced to get into the character's head and define its personality.

Christian Walker

ROLE MODELS



Painting Miniatures: The Basics

by Mike McVey

Nothing brings a tabletop to life like well-painted miniatures. Not only do they give you a visual sense of what's going on but they can also add atmosphere and excitement. How many players can say that they don't quake in their boots when an awesome black dragon miniature is placed on the table? Miniature painting goes beyond the tabletop, and the time spent creating your own miniature masterpieces can be intensely rewarding. For many, miniature painting becomes a hobby in its own right, and the hours spent on painting the characters and monsters are as satisfying as the games themselves.

One of the most common reasons that people are put off by miniature painting is that they see beautifully painted models in hobby stores, or here in *Dragon Magazine,* and say, "They look great—but I'd never be able to do that!" But you can! Remember, the people who painted those display standard miniatures had to start somewhere, and their first faltering steps followed the same path.

Over the next few months, I'm going to be introducing you to the world of painting miniatures. We'll start at the beginning and work our way up: from applying and mixing paints, through creating realistic shading and highlighting, right up to special painting techniques. We'll cover everything you need to become a great painter. Before you know it, someone will be looking at your models and say, "Wow, those are great—but I'd never be able to that."

What will I need?

Before you can apply paint to model, there are a few things you will need. Most importantly, of course, are paints and brushes. You'll also need a palette, something in which to wash your brushes, and something to dry them on.

Paint

Paint can be something of an area of confusion for those new to the hobby, as there are many different types of paint available: oil, enamel, and acrylic to name a few. Rather than go on about the pros and cons of each, I am

THE WORKSTATION

Setting up a good place to paint that encourages good habits is crucial to creating beautiful miniatures without losing your sanity.

LIGHT: A fluorescent swing-arm lamp or good outdoor light from a window works best.

BRUSHES: A small assortment of brushes will usually meet all of your needs. Having a few older brushes around is nice for mixing colors or drybrushing. Don't dip your brushes deeply into the paint. Only use the tip of the bristle.

PAINTS: Acrylic paint made for miniatures is the best way to go. They're available in a wide variety of colors including metallics for armor and such. At first you should only need primary colors (red, blue, and yellow), black, and white. Don't mix oil-based paints with your acrylics, which are water-based, because it will make cleanup very difficult.

WATER: A large, stable container will prevent a horrible mess. Don't store your brushes in water.

PALETTE: A white plate or a wax-paper pad work great for mixing your colors. Do not dip your brushes directly into the jars.

POSTURE: Keep your elbows on the table to increase stability and bring the miniature to your eyes, not your eyes to your miniature. Don't lean over the table or you'll soon become too sore to complete your collection. *Happy painting!*

just going to recommend hobby acrylics (the sort that come in small pots or jars, not tubes of artist's acrylic). These are bright, clean, and easy to use. What's more, they provide the best results. Start with a small range of colors. Many manufacturers' ranges have boxed starter sets aimed at beginners. Acrylic paint is thinned with water, so you don't need to bother with special thinners. If you have to buy them individually, go for: red, yellow, blue, green, flesh, black, white, and silver to start with. You can build this up later with other colors until you have a range you are happy with.

Brushes

Your paintbrushes are the tools of your trade. To a large extent, the quality of brushes you use governs your finished results. That doesn't mean that as soon as you take up painting miniatures you need to rush out and buy the most expensive brushes you can find. There are plenty of mid-quality artists' brushes available that will stand you in good stead when you get started. The most important thing is that you take care of whatever you buy.

Bits and pieces

I use a sheet of thin plastic card as a palette, but many people use either a tile or an old plate. As long as it's clean and white, it'll be fine. I also like to use an old coffee jar to keep water in to clean my brushes, and I have a small stack of paper towels to dry them. Paper towels are also really useful for removing excess paint from the brush and cleaning up spills.

Where do I paint?

One of the great things about miniature painting is that you don't need lots of equipment or space. My entire painting kit packs down into a small shoebox (and I've got far more paints than I really need). That means I can paint pretty much wherever I want. The only necessity is good lighting. Natural daylight is best; I like to paint next to a window, but not in direct sunlight. Most people only have time to paint in the evenings and have to rely on artificial light. Florescent lighting should be your first choice—they're even better if they have daylight simulation strips fitted on. They give a softer, more even light than standard light bulbs, which means they cast less shadow on the miniatures. If you are using a desk lamp to paint under, make sure it's not too close; the heat causes the paint to dry too quickly.

The only other concerns about your painting area are that you work on a sturdy, flat surface and sit in a comfortable chair. It's also a good idea to cover your work surface with a couple of sheets of newspaper to protect it from spills.

That's all you need! It's important to look after your painting kit and keep it clean and in good order. These first steps might seem boring when you're dying to get on with the painting, but believe me, you'll get better results if you use the right equipment and set yourself up correctly.

That's it for this month. Next month we'll get down to the real nitty-gritty of applying paint to the miniatures!

SAGE ADVICE

Need some help with your game?

by Skip Williams (thesage@wizards.com)

IN THE U.S.
"Sage Advice," *Dragon Magazine*
1801 Lind Avenue S.W.; Renton, WA 98055

IN EUROPE
"Sage Advice," *Dragon Magazine*
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium; P.O. Box 2031 2600; Berchem, Belgium

IN THE U.K.
"Sage Advice," *Dragon Magazine*
Wizards of the Coast; P.O. Box 61; Maidenhead, Berkshire SL61FX

THIS MONTH

This month, the Sage examines clerics and monks in the D&D game, then moves on for a look at the ins and outs of combat.

The section on alignment in the cleric class description (pages 29-30 in the *Player's Handbook*) says most clerics of Heironeous, the lawful good god of valor, are lawful good themselves, but some are lawful neutral or neutral good. This seems to conflict with the statement that a cleric cannot be neutral unless his deity is neutral. I don't understand this restriction.

In this case, "neutral" means "true neutral," or neutral on both the good-evil axis and on the law-chaos axis. (See page 89 in the *Player's Handbook*.) A cleric's alignment must be the same as his deity's alignment or within one step of his deity's alignment; that is, adjacent (but not on a diagonal) to the deity's alignment on the alignment chart. See Table 6-1. The true neutral alignment is an exception. You can't have a true neutral cleric of a deity who is not true neutral. Note that St. Cuthbert, a lawful neutral deity, allows only lawful good or lawful neutral clerics, even though the lawful evil alignment is within one step of St. Cuthbert's alignment.

The *Player's Handbook* says ex-clerics lose all class features; presumably clerics don't lose their armor and shield proficiencies, or their weapon proficiencies (except those granted as domain powers), both of which are listed as class features.

Armor, shield, and weapon proficiencies are indeed class features for clerics and for any other class. Nevertheless, you're correct. Ex-clerics lose spells, domain powers (including domain-based weapons), spontaneous casting, and power over the undead. They retain proficiency in simple weapons and all types of armor and shields.

Can true neutral clerics of true neutral deities, such as Fharlanghn, cast any Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law spell? Does a true neutral cleric's choice of whether to turn or rebuke undead affect what spells she can cast?

True neutral clerics can cast any spell of Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law, provided the spell in question is on the cleric spell list (see pages 160-163 in the *Player's Handbook*) or in one of the cleric's chosen domains.

The cleric's choice of whether to turn or rebuke undead affects does not affect what spells she can prepare, but it does affect what spells she can cast spontaneously, as noted on page 32 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Does the Extra Turning feat work for a neutral or evil cleric who has the power to rebuke undead?

Yes, clerics who rebuke undead can use the Extra Turning feat to gain four more uses of the rebuke power each day. Note that true neutral clerics either turn or rebuke undead; they cannot have it both ways. For example, a true neutral cleric who has chosen to rebuke undead can choose the Extra Turning feat to gain four extra uses of the rebuke power each day, but he cannot use Extra Turning to get four uses of the turn power.

Can a monk get an extra unarmed attack each round by making an off-hand attack? The monk class description says making an off-hand strike makes no sense for a monk fighting unarmed. Presumably, this means that monks are always considered to be using their primary hand when striking unarmed, regardless of which arm (or leg) is used. The wording in the book suggests that off-hand strikes are possible for an unarmed monk, just unwise. How would making an off-hand unarmed attack affect the monk's flurry of blows ability?

There's no such thing as a monk making an off-hand unarmed attack (because monks are already using pretty much their whole bodies for unarmed combat). For unarmed monks, the flurry of blows ability replaces off-hand unarmed attacks.

Can monks deal subdual damage with unarmed strikes without grappling? If so, do they suffer a -4 attack penalty as with any other attack that deals normal damage?

A monk's unarmed strikes usually deal normal damage, but a monk can choose to deal subdual damage instead with no penalty to her attack roll. A monk has the same choice to deal normal or subdual damage while grappling. (See Grapple on page 137 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

Does a monk or other character with the Improved Unarmed Strike feat provoke an attack of opportunity when starting a grapple?

Yes. Grabbing and holding on to a foe is a tad more risky than just hitting the foe.

Does the monk's Wisdom-based bonus to Armor Class prevent a rogue from using the sneak attack ability against him (like the uncanny dodge ability)?

No. If monks got uncanny dodge or the equivalent of that ability the class description would say so.

A monk doesn't get to add his base attack bonus to his unarmed attack bonus does he? I was a little confused when reading the section in the monk class description about flurry of blows. It talks about a 6th-level monk with two unarmed attacks at +7 and +4. The chart shows a monk at 6th level that gets two attacks at +4 and +1.

No. You don't add a monk's base attack bonus to the monk's unarmed attack bonus. Use the Base Attack column on Table 3-10 when a monk uses a weapon and use the Unarmed Attack column when the monk attacks without a weapon.

The flurry of blows example is erroneous; actually it's based on an unpublished version of Ember, our iconic monk, who has some extra bonuses figured into her attack values. A 6th-level monk with no extra bonuses normally gets two unarmed attacks at +4/+1 (not +5/+2 as shown in the example). If she uses flurry of blows, she gets an extra unarmed attack at her highest attack bonus, but all her unarmed attacks suffer a -2 penalty, which gives her three unarmed attacks at +2/+2/-1.

I can find no mention in the *Player's Handbook* of a monk's unarmed strike having a critical of x2. However, on the monk character sheet it lists it that way. What is the correct value? Also, when does an unarmed attack score a threat?

Any weapon (including an unarmed strike and a monster's natural weapon) threatens a critical on an attack roll of 20 and inflicts x2 damage on a confirmed critical hit unless some other value is listed.

How long does it take a monk to use the wholeness of body ability? Is it treated as a spell-like ability for use in combat? Does it function in antimagic fields?

Wholeness of body is a supernatural ability. Supernatural abilities don't work in antimagic fields and using them does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Using wholeness of body is a standard action. (Using any supernatural ability is a standard action unless its description specifically says otherwise.)

The *shocking grasp* spell's description says you get a +3 attack bonus if you use the spell to attack a foe who is wearing metal armor. Isn't this a bit illogical since the spellcaster ignores the armor for the purpose of hitting the foe with this kind of spell? Doesn't this take the armor out of the equation?

No. The metal attracts the electrical discharge from the spell and makes the target even easier to hit than normal. The target still does not get the benefit of armor, natural armor, or a shield.

Can a spellcaster, arcane or divine, cast a spell requiring somatic or material components if he has a weapon in one hand and a buckler in the other? A small shield? A large shield?

No in all cases. You must have at least one free hand to cast a spell with a somatic component. (See page 151 in the *Player's Handbook*.) You could drop the weapon (or the buckler or shield) as a free action and then cast the spell.

Can you raise a skill as a cross-class skill if you have it already as a class skill or vice-versa? For example, can a 3rd-level wizard with 6 ranks of Concentration take a level as a fighter and raise Concentration as a cross-class skill? If the skill wasn't maxed out would it matter? Is a skill's maximum rank dependant on the character's class level or the character level?

A multiclass character's maximum rank in a skill is based on character level; character level plus three if the skill is a class skill for any of the character's classes, or half that if the skill is cross class for all the character's classes. (See page 56 in the *Player's Handbook*.)

A 3rd-level wizard/1st-level fighter has a maximum rank of 7 (4+3) in Concentration or in any other skill that's a class skill for a fighter or for a wizard. The character in your example would have to pay two skill points for one rank of Concentration since he's buying the rank with fighter skill points.

How are feats handled for multiclass characters? Say I have a character who is a fighter/wizard. I understand that every character, regardless of class, receives a new feat every three levels. What about bonus feats from a class? A fighter gets a bonus feat at 1st level and every two levels. Wizards receive Scribe Scroll at 1st level and a bonus feat every five levels. Would all these bonus feats stack up? Would the aforementioned fighter/wizard receive all these feats?

Every character gets one feat for every three character levels. (Your character level is the sum of all your

POWERPLAY

BY SEAN K REYNOLDS

Who Needs a Fighter?

With *divine favor* (+2 luck bonus), *divine power* (+4 from 18 Strength), *greater magic weapon* (+2 enhancement to a weapon), and *prayer* (+1 morale bonus), an 8th-level cleric (+6/+1 base) is at least +15/+10 to attacks for 8 rounds, which is better than an 8th-level fighter with 20 Strength and the Weapon Focus feat (+14/+9).

class levels.) Characters get bonus feats from their classes according to their class level. For example, a 5th-level fighter/5th-level wizard would have 4 feats for her character level (you get a feat at 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels), plus 3 extra fighter feats (at 1st, 2nd, and 4th level), plus 2 wizard feats (Scribe Scroll at 1st level and a bonus feat at 5th level), for a total of 9 feats.

The descriptions for light and heavy crossbows in the *Player's Handbook* say a character can fire one of them with each hand. The hand crossbow description, however, makes no mention of such an action. Is this penalty the same for hand crossbows, or is such an action implicitly prohibited (which seems extremely odd)?

Heavy and light crossbows are two-handed weapons that can be fired (but not loaded) with one hand at an extra penalty (-4), provided the wielder is of sufficient size. Firing a crossbow in each hand is even more difficult (-10 for the primary hand and -14 for the off hand, or -10 for each hand if the shooter has Ambidexterity). Note that for a creature of medium size or larger, a light crossbow is a light weapon, which reduces the two-weapon penalty by 2 (-8 for the primary and -12 for the offhand or -8 for each hand with Ambidexterity).

The hand crossbow is a one-handed weapon, and there is no penalty for using a hand crossbow in one hand. Note that since a hand crossbow is Tiny, a Diminutive creature would need two hands to use it. In such a case, treat one-handed use just like a light crossbow used in one hand.

Small or Medium-size characters can fire hand crossbows from each hand according to the normal rules for attacking with two-weapons. Usually the shooter suffers a -4 penalty for the primary hand and a -8 penalty for the off hand (-4/-4 with Ambidexterity) because a hand crossbow is a light weapon for most characters, see pages 124-125 in the *Player's Handbook*.

Note that the Two-Weapon Fighting feat is for melee and does not reduce the penalties for using two ranged weapons.

The 1st-level sorcerer/wizard spell *true strike* gives a +20 attack bonus on the user's next attack, but only for the duration of the spell, which is 1 round. First off, is +20 correct? Even if for only one attack, +20 seems like a major bonus for a 1st-level spell. Also, if I'm understanding initiative properly the spell would expire on your initiative the following round; would you be able to gain the bonus on that attack then? For example, If I have a wizard who moves his 30-foot speed and casts *true strike*, would he get the +20 attack bonus the next round when he moves another 30 feet and stabs a foe with his dagger?

Yes. *True strike* grants a +20 bonus to your next attack.

In the D&D game, a "round" begins on your turn and ends when it's your turn again. The *true strike* spell actually lasts until the end of the caster's next turn or until the caster attacks, whichever comes first.

The duration entry for *true strike* should read "See text," and the spell description should read:

You gain temporary, intuitive insight into the immediate future during your next attack. Your next single attack roll (if it is made before the end of the next round) gains a +20 insight bonus. Additionally, you are not affected by the miss chance that applies to attacks against a concealed target.

If you use the *true strike* spell and you roll a critical threat, does the +20 bonus from the spell apply to the critical confirmation roll? Would the +20 bonus apply to the extra attacks you get from the Cleave, Great Cleave, or Whirlwind attack feats?

When you make a critical roll, you use whatever bonuses apply to the attack roll that made the threat, no matter where those bonuses came from.

True strike affects only one attack; a critical roll is not a separate attack for this purpose. If you make multiple attacks in a round, your bonus from *true strike* applies only to the first attack you make, no matter how you managed to get multiple attacks.

When you attack with two weapons, how do you figure out the attack bonus for the second weapon? The Improved Two-Weapon Fighting feat gives you two extra attacks with your second weapon, how do you figure out the attack bonus for those attacks?

An attack with a second weapon uses the wielder's base attack bonus, plus all applicable modifiers; some penalty for attacking with two weapons always applies. (See pages 124-125 in the *Player's Handbook*.)

If you're using Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you figure the attack bonus for your first attack exactly as for regular two-weapon fighting; the attack bonus for the second attack is made with a -5 penalty from the first attack.

How many attacks would a character with the Whirlwind Attack feat strike if she were attacking with two weapons? What if she has Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting? What if she also as Improved Two-Weapon Fighting?

If you don't have Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you get one attack against every foe within 5 feet, plus one attack for the second weapon. The Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats reduce your penalties, but they don't give you any extra attacks.

If you also have Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you get one attack against every foe within 5 feet, plus two attacks with the second weapon.

In either case, you must use your primary weapon for Whirlwind Attack (although you can decide which weapon is "primary"). Note that your two-weapon attack penalties apply to every attack you make during the Whirlwind Attack.

I can't find any rules on a partial charge. I would assume that it is just a charge at half the speed of normal, but I don't know where I can find that information. What exactly is a partial charge?

A partial charge is a charge you take as a partial action. It works just like a regular charge, except you can move

POWERPLAY

Animate Rope + Net

You can cast this spell on a fighting net, letting you attack after a miss without taking the -4 penalty for using an unfolded net. The spell and the net impose exactly the same penalties if they entangle—the effects do not stack. An interesting character concept is the gladiator whose net is enchanted with this spell to fold itself after a missed attack.

only your speed—not up to twice your speed as in a regular charge.

Are bonus spells for high ability scores cumulative in the new edition of D&D as they were in the 2nd Edition AD&D game?

No. Each line on Table 2-1 gives you all the bonus spells you get for a particular ability score.

The description of the ranger class says rangers cannot use double-headed weapons when using their two-weapon fighting ability. What, exactly, is a double-headed weapon? The glossary has an entry for a double weapon, but not for a double-headed weapon. Is a quarterstaff a double-headed weapon?

Though the ranger class description refers to a double-headed weapon, the correct term is "double weapon." (A "double-ended" weapon also is a double weapon.)

All double weapons are shown on Table 7-4. If the weapon has two damage ratings separated by a slash it is a double weapon. A quarterstaff is a double weapon.

One can use both ends of a double weapon just as if they were two weapons, or just one end. (If you use one end in two hands, you get one and half times your Strength bonus to damage.) Rangers, however, cannot use double weapons with their special two-weapon fighting abilities, not even quarterstaffs.

Does moving away from an opponent who threatens you (which is a move action) to load a crossbow (which is a move-equivalent action) provoke an attack of opportunity (assuming you complete your initial move action in a space that isn't threatened)? I realize the act of loading a light crossbow alone provokes an attack of opportunity (assuming someone threatens the loader). I would think that if a character moves away from a threatened area to load a crossbow, that character would be taking a double move action and not suffer an attack of opportunity.

In this case, you do indeed provoke an attack of opportunity when you leave the first threatened space if you move more than 5 feet. Taking a move plus a move-equivalent action is not a double move action; a double move action is moving up to twice your speed and doing nothing else. Move-equivalent actions are so named not because they're exactly the same as moving but because you can perform them and still do something that you normally would combine with a move, such as firing the crossbow you have just reloaded.

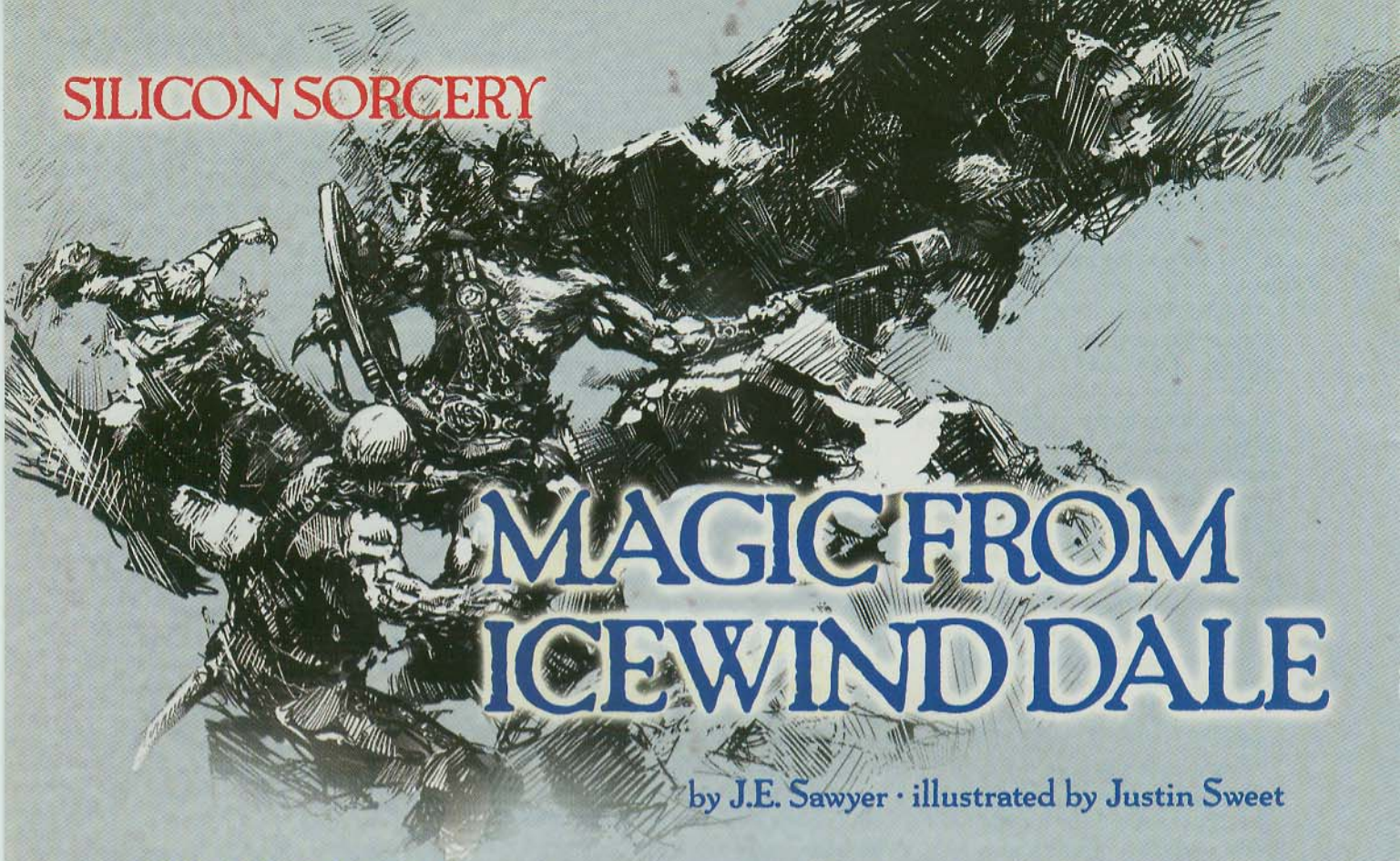
First, suppose I don't have Ambidexterity and I attack with my off hand. Do I lose half my Strength bonus to my attack roll and my damage roll, or just to my damage roll? Second, please tell me that Ambidexterity negates the damage penalty for off-hand attacks. If not, why not?

Your full Strength bonus applies to off-hand melee attack rolls, only your damage bonus is reduced for the off hand. (See the definition of "off-hand" on p. 280 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

Your damage bonus from Strength is always reduced with your off hand, even if you have the Ambidexterity feat. Ambidexterity negates the penalties for making off-hand attacks, but the damage reduction is not a "penalty," it's a rule that governs how a Strength bonus to damage works. If you use two hands to attack, you get one and half times your Strength bonus to damage. In the case of a two-handed weapon, you multiply your Strength bonus by 1.5 (and round down to the nearest whole number). If you're using two weapons, you apply the full damage bonus to the primary hand and half the bonus (rounded down to the nearest whole number) to the secondary hand.

If the game did not have this rule you'd actually get more benefit from a high Strength score from using two small, lighter weapons that you would for using a really big heavy weapon in two hands.

DRAGON COMICS IN THEIR OWN COMIC BOOKS!
DORK TOWER #12
WARHAMSTER IS HERE! Can Matt survive the transition to third edition? Does eBay have room for his now-useless second edition rulebooks, worldbooks and splatbooks?
PLUS: the long-lost WARHAMSTER FIRST EDITION RULES by J. Jerry Jax and Joe Cottonworthy (as filtered through Wick and Kovalic)
NODWICK #6
Immortals are running amuck, and for some reason, they think Nodwick's noggin is a prize pick! After many Hench-heads go flying, our heroes set out to put and end to the henchicide! ...and if Artax and Yeagar manage to become immortal along the way, what's the harm, right?
www.dorkstorm.com
Pick up a Dork Storm comic book every month!
MAKE SURE THAT YOUR GAME OR COMIC RETAILER CARRIES YOUR FAVORITE TITLES FROM DORK STORM PRESS!



MAGIC FROM ICEWIND DALE

by J.E. Sawyer · illustrated by Justin Sweet

Black Isle Studios' *Icewind Dale* and BioWare's *Baldur's Gate 2: Shadows of Amn* have powerful and interesting magic items used by villains and PCs—but both games use old AD&D rules. Here are some items from *Icewind Dale* updated to the new D&D rules. Statistics are only a small part of what defines magic items. The history of an item's creation and its owners can turn an "ordinary" *+1 mace* into a cherished heirloom. In wielding and wearing these powerful devices, characters become part of the items' history, perhaps outshining the deeds of the previous owners in the process.

ALAMION ("FROST FATHER")

This longsword is part of a matched pair of weapons, the other being the short sword Malamion. Alamion's blade is slightly thinner than a typical longsword blade and has a fuller down the center. Acid-etched snowflake patterns are scattered along the length of the blade, most of them concentrated near the hilt. The hilt of the sword is made of bronze sandwiched between two pieces of ivory carved to show clouds unleashing winds and snow. The grip is covered with mother-of-pearl lashed securely into place with bronze wire. The pommel of the weapon is a solid bronze globe with the snowflake lozenge of Auril etched into the bottom.

The full history of this blade and its brother has been well documented. Roughly two hundred years ago, a wizard from Shannath named Obren the Left-Handed was hired to make a pair of swords for the glory of Auril. Obren did so reluctantly, producing Alamion ("Frost Father") and Malamion ("Frost Baby") over a five-year period. After a dispute about Obren's fee, priests of Auril tried to take the sword from him by force. The outcome of the battle is unclear, but Obren's swords did not end up in the hands of Auril's faithful. Thirty years later, a warrior named Berdino in Procampur bragged that he had a blade that could kill demons with a single strike. Berdino was found dead on a beach two tendays later, the victim of many poisoned crossbow bolts.

The new owner of Alamion was a vain, egotistical thief called Pellas the Fair. Pellas had learned of Malamion accidentally fourteen years earlier and strongly desired Alamion when he learned of its existence. Pellas held onto the swords until he died at the hands of Garijon Renold, a paladin of Torm. Garijon found the blades invaluable in his battles against the fiery denizens of the outer planes, and the two swords were passed on for generations in his order, from paladin to paladin.

Heleban of Ithmong, a paladin of Tyr, was the last warrior known to have used the swords. His battles against slavers and pirates on the Sword Coast are believed to have brought him to an untimely end.

Alamion is a *+2 longsword bane against evil outsiders.* The wielder is affected by an *endure elements (fire)* spell as if cast by an 8th-level wizard as long as the sword is held. The weapon has a detection power as well. Whenever a fire-using creature (any creature that has a fire-based attack) comes within 100 yards of the blade, Alamion changes in appearance from shining, etched steel to glowing, translucent ice. Wherever the wielder goes, so long as she grips the weapon and is within 100 yards of a fire-using creature, she leaves frosted footprints.

Caster Level: 8th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *locate creature, endure elements,* caster must be good; ***Market Price:*** 90,315 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 45,158 gp + 3613 xp

DEAD MAN'S FACE

These ancient helms were once common among the Reghedmen barbarians who came to what is now known as

Icewind Dale. The design of the armor is relatively simple: a plain iron helm with a hinged faceplate. Once the basic construction of the helm had been finished, craftsmen would tool the image of a dead warrior onto the faceplate. The name of the warrior and a one-word description of his death were carved into the forehead of the mask. The helm was then left in the dead warrior's funeral pyre. The shamans believed that the mask would hide the dead man's fear of the afterlife when he was judged by Tempus. After a month had passed, the helms of particularly valiant warriors were recovered by the priests. Over the next few years, the shamans praised the valiant warriors by name in their daily rituals. According to legend, if Tempus found the warrior to be truly valiant, the helm would gain the power to make the wearer immune to fear.

Dead Man's Face helm grant a +1 bonus to Armor Class. In addition, it grants a +4 resistance bonus to Will saving throws against fear effects.

Caster Level: 3rd; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *remove fear;* ***Market Price:*** 6,310 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 3,155 gp + 253 xp

FAITH KILLER

This deceptively mundane looking battleaxe has a short but strange history. According to philosophers of magic, Faith Killer was enchanted by the non-belief of its owner, the warrior Erion the Skeptic. A rarity in Faerûn, Erion was a man who denied the existence of holy magic and the gods themselves. He was known for his attempts to prove that priests were charlatans and holy magic was, in actuality, a different form of standard magic. Sages believe that Erion's intense opposition to holy men and women actually generated sympathetic magical powers in his weapon. Over time, Erion's hostility toward priests became more than just verbal. He went on a killing spree in the remote areas of Cormyr, eventually working his way toward Westgate. Priests of Selûne in that harbor town confiscated the axe when they killed the cleric-slayer in self-defense. It is believed that Erion became one of the unbelievers used as a building block in Myrkul's Bone Castle.

Faith Killer is a *+2 battleaxe bane against lawful outsiders.* If Faith Killer inflicts a critical hit, all divine magical effects on the target are subjected to the effects of a *dispel magic* spell cast by a 10th level wizard. A lawful outsider who attempts to pick up Faith Killer and fails a Fortitude save (DC 25) takes 10 points of electrical damage per round of contact. If the saving throw is successful, the lawful outsider takes 5 points of damage per round.

Caster Level: 8th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster I, dispel magic;* ***Market Price:*** 69,810; ***Cost to Create:*** 34,905 gp + 2792 xp

THE BITCH QUEEN'S ENVOY

Representatives of Umberlee, the so-called Bitch Queen, were given this shield to display to the court of Ishtishia on trips to the Elemental Plane of Water. It protected its bearers on numerous occasions. The envoys of the Queen of the Sea rarely abused the powers of the device, but it took only one mischievous priest to lose the item. Legends say that Herren of Umberlee used the shield's sanctuary to attack and destroy a number of elementals before the water lord Ishtishia shifted the priest to the Para-elemental Plane of Ice, where he froze to death. From there, it is believed that the shield floated around the planes for many years, only recently resurfacing in Faerûn. The shield is notable for its unique appearance. Made of everbright metal, the small shield has a blue sheen and bears the crashing waves of Umberlee on its face. Small shells decorate the edges of the shield, magically embedded into the metal.

The Bitch Queen's Envoy is a *+2 small steel shield.* The bearer is invisible to all non-divine creatures native to the Elemental Plane of Water. Even if elemental water creatures are able to see the bearer of the shield (via magical means), the bearer is warded against contact as though he or she were affected by a *protection from evil* spell. If the bearer attacks an individual creature, the *invisibility* and *protection from evil* of the shield are negated against that particular creature forever. Divine creatures, or those who are acting under the direct control of divine creatures, can ignore the effects of the shield.

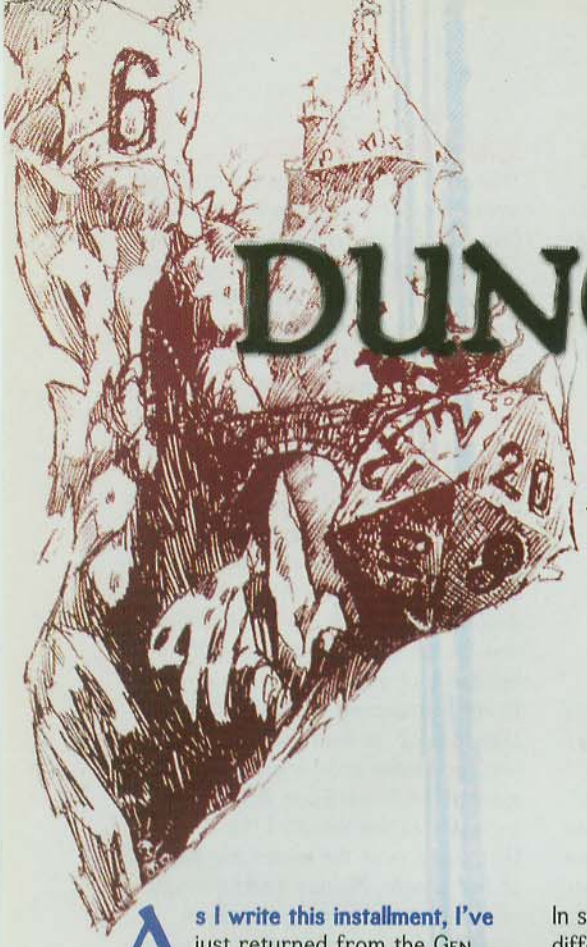
Caster Level: 3rd; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *invisibility, protection from evil;* ***Market Price:*** 16,309; ***Cost to Create:*** 8,155 gp + 652 xp

BLACK SWAN ARMOR

This armor was made by the dwarven smith Karador and the elven enchanter Elameth of Five Trees. During the time of cooperation between the elven Hand of the Seldarine and the dwarves of Dorn's Deep, many wondrous items were produced. This suit of armor was one of them. Enameled bluish-black, the smooth plate armor has everbright silver edges and features the small silver emblem of a swan in the center of the breastplate. The armor is exceptionally light for its strength and was originally worn by a female elven marshal in the Severed Hand. When the citadel fell to goblinoid attackers, the marshal died and the armor lay under the rubble for hundreds of years. When the devil Belhifet attempted to conquer Icewind Dale, one of his lieutenants, the elven warrior known as Maiden Ilmadia, claimed the Black Swan Armor from the ruins of the Severed Hand. Distraught over the impending Retreat of her people, Maiden Ilmadia sought to re-establish the once-great elven citadels of the north. Her plans were ruined when a band of adventurers stormed her fiery domain in Lower Dorn's Deep.

Black Swan Armor is a suit of *+2 half-plate* but is treated as chainmail for all other purposes, including maximum Dexterity bonus, armor check penalty, arcane spell failure, speed, and weight. Dwarven craftsmanship combined with elven magic have conferred the powers of Acid Resistance, Cold Resistance, Fire Resistance, and Lightning Resistance upon the armor. In addition, the elves of the Hand of the Seldarine enchanted the suit with great powers of command. After a month of regularly wearing the armor (at least 4 hours every day), the character is considered to have great prestige and receives a +2 enhancement bonus to Charisma for purposes of the Leadership feat. If the character already possesses great prestige, the armor does not provide the +2 bonus. If the character does not have the Leadership feat, no benefits are gained from the powers of command.

Caster Level: 3rd; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Arms and Armor, *freedom of movement, resistance;* ***Market Price:*** 27,562; ***Cost to Create:*** 13,781 gp + 1,103 xp



DUNGEONCRAFT

by Ray Winninger

Send email to: scalemail@wizards.com

"Dungeoncraft" c/o *Dragon Magazine*
1801 Lind Ave. S.W. • Renton, WA 98055

As I write this installment, I've just returned from the Gen Con 2000 Game Fair, where the new edition of the Dungeons & Dragons *Player's Handbook* was released amid much fanfare. Many of you who have written over the last several months have asked if and when I'll begin referencing the new edition's rules in "Dungeoncraft." Now that the project's veil of secrecy has been lifted, I can answer those two questions: 1) yes, of course; and 2) right now. From this installment forward, I'll refer exclusively to the new rules when preparing this column.

Does this mean I'll go back and rewrite the previous twenty-three installments for the new rules? Well, no. Fortunately, the rules haven't changed enough to invalidate the majority of the advice I've offered over the last two years. For the most part, building a world and preparing a campaign under the new rules is much like building a world and preparing a campaign under the old rules. I'll occasionally revisit and revise some of my old advice in the installments to come, but for now you can safely assume that most of what I've presented so far is as valid under the new rules as it was when you first read it.

This doesn't mean that the new edition doesn't change the DM's job description. In some ways, the new game is very different from its predecessor and requires some very different approaches. In order to make this transition over to the new rules as easy as possible, I'm devoting this installment and the next to a discussion of how the new rules might impact the Dungeon Master. I can guarantee you that the first thing your players are going to do after getting their brand new copies of the *Player's Handbook* is to start looking for ways they can use all those new rules, feats, and skills to their advantage. Consider these two installments our opportunity, as DMs, to do the same.

WHEN SHOULD I SWITCH OVER TO THE NEW RULES?

Before I consider the rules themselves, it's worth spending a few paragraphs discussing when—or if—you should migrate your existing campaigns over to the new rules. The most important thing to remember when you are considering these questions is that you shouldn't be in any sort of hurry to fix something that isn't broken. Sudden change can be bad. If your campaign is progressing well and your players are having fun, take your time before making the big switch. Give yourself and your players an opportunity to fully digest the new rules and familiarize yourselves with their idiosyncrasies.

In the meantime, you might try running one or two new edition "one-shot" game sessions outside the bounds of your regular campaign. This insures that everyone has some combat experience before you risk your real game and the players' beloved PCs.

The easiest way to organize a one-shot session, of course, is to pick up a copy of *Dungeon Magazine* and run one of the excellent adventures within. If your players are really dedicated to your current campaign, though, completely abandoning it runs the risk of dampening their interest and interfering with your momentum. In this case, you might design a special one-shot scenario set on the same world as your regular campaign, but using entirely different PCs. Take advantage of this opportunity to give your players a brief glimpse into an entirely different facet of your setting. Two particularly interesting tactics immediately come to mind:

Design an adventure that allows the players to assume the roles of their traditional adversaries. Suppose, for instance, that your campaign regularly pits the players against an infamous tribe of orcs (like the Aris campaign I've built in these articles). The adventure you run to introduce your players to the new rules might put them in the roles of the orcs for

a change. Maybe they have to kidnap a princess or acquire a powerful magic item from a nearby band of elves. If you do this right, you might even leave yourself with a great springboard for an adventure in the "real" campaign. Once they've successfully captured that princess, maybe the players must resume their traditional roles to pursue the orcs and retrieve her!

Give the players the opportunity to play legendary and long-dead characters from your campaign setting. In the Aris-based adventure "Secrets of the Scar" from *Dungeon* #80, a legendary order of clerics once operated a hidden temple, and some of the world's most interesting and formative events took place within the confines of their secret stronghold. An interesting "practice" adventure might place the players in the roles of those clerics and call upon them to protect the stronghold as it stood several hundred years ago. Not only would such an adventure give your players the sense that they are making an important contribution to the history of your game world, it might also give them the added pleasure of playing high-level characters for a change.

Even after you are sure that you and your players have plenty of experience with the new game rules, you should only migrate your campaign once you're certain that you've had enough time to carefully consider all the implications of the conversion. Whatever methods you employ, though, the full process is certain to be time-consuming and require a lot of care. Again, don't feel rushed. Your players have waited this long for the new rules, and they can wait another couple months if necessary.

A few of you might be wondering if you should ever switch over to the new rules. While it might seem like a lot of work to migrate to the new edition, I guarantee that the exciting opportunities the new rules open up will make the transition worthwhile. You should also note that not adopting the new rules will eventually make it more difficult to play the game. Unless you are using the new rules, you'll no longer have easy access to new game elements introduced in products and magazines published by Wizards of the Coast. Eventually, you'll find it harder and harder to locate players who are familiar with your chosen flavor. As a consequence, your decision should probably center around "when" and not "if." Even those of you who are heavily dependent on special 2nd Edition rules are likely to see new edition replacements come your way eventually. Again, feel free to delay the conversion until you are completely comfortable.

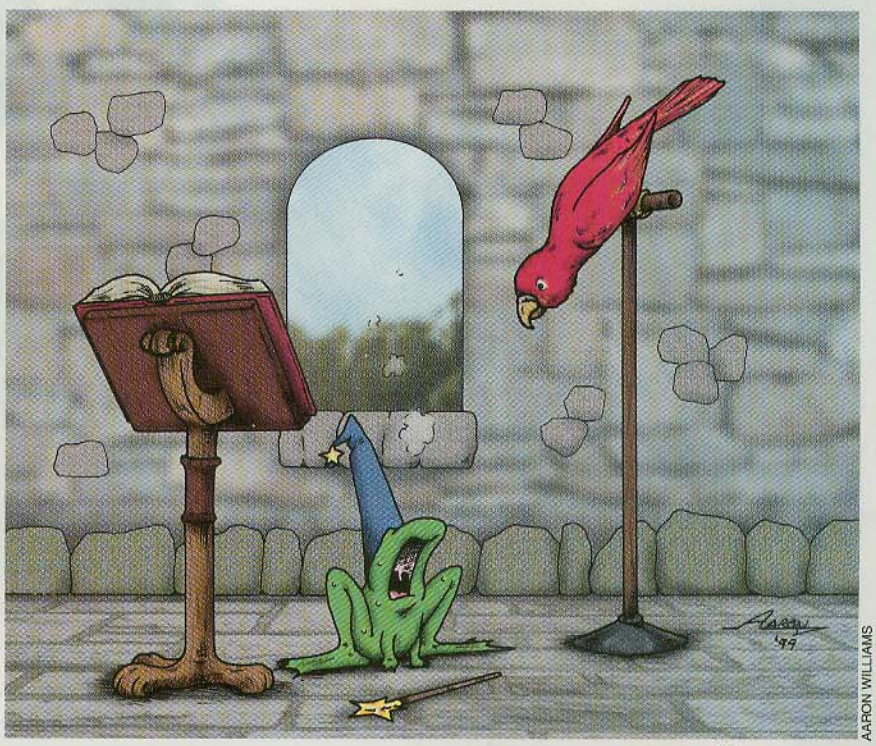
THE HEART OF THE NEW EDITION

A large portion of the rules changes introduced in the new edition fall into a single bracket. Despite its voluminous rulebooks, old fashioned D&D was simple and unsophisticated at its core. The old rules handled lots of sticky situations by not handling the situation at all. Whenever something unusual happened or a player decided to take an unexpected action, the DM was forced to resolve the situation by making an arbitrary judgement or inventing a new rule on the fly. Suppose a non-thief is forced to scale a wall in order to escape pursuit, or a fighter tries to bluff an enemy into making a tactical blunder. Do their efforts succeed? The old rules provided no real guidance for resolution, forcing the DM to improvise. It was situations like these that inspired the Third Rule of Dungeoncraft.

THE OLD RULES PROVIDED NO REAL GUIDANCE FOR RESOLUTION, FORCING THE DM TO IMPROVISE.

> **THE THIRD RULE OF DUNGEONCRAFT**
>
> Whenever you have no idea what the probability of success should be for a particular situation, consider it 50%.

Although the old approach usually worked well once you got used to it, it also stymied some beginning DMs and forced them to "freeze up" during play. With absolutely no rules advice to fall back on, these beginners sometimes found the process of making snap



AARON WILLIAMS

"WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP READING OVER MY SHOULDER?!!"

decisions daunting. In turn, they would develop all sorts of bad habits in order to avoid being put on the spot.

The new rules adopt an entirely different philosophy and attempt to provide a much more comprehensive set of guidelines for resolving a wide variety of actions and situations. The best illustration of this philosophy is the interlocking series of ability and skill checks that can be used to resolve just about anything a player might attempt. Although the DM is still forced to decide exactly what attributes and skills apply to an action and how difficult the action is, it's often easier to make these simple decisions than to make a completely arbitrary ruling with no guidance at all. Another illustration of the new philosophy is the series of comprehensive rules for handling unique situations presented in the new *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Although the new rules don't really allow us to get rid of the Third Rule of Dungeoncraft altogether, they guarantee that we're forced to invoke it less often.

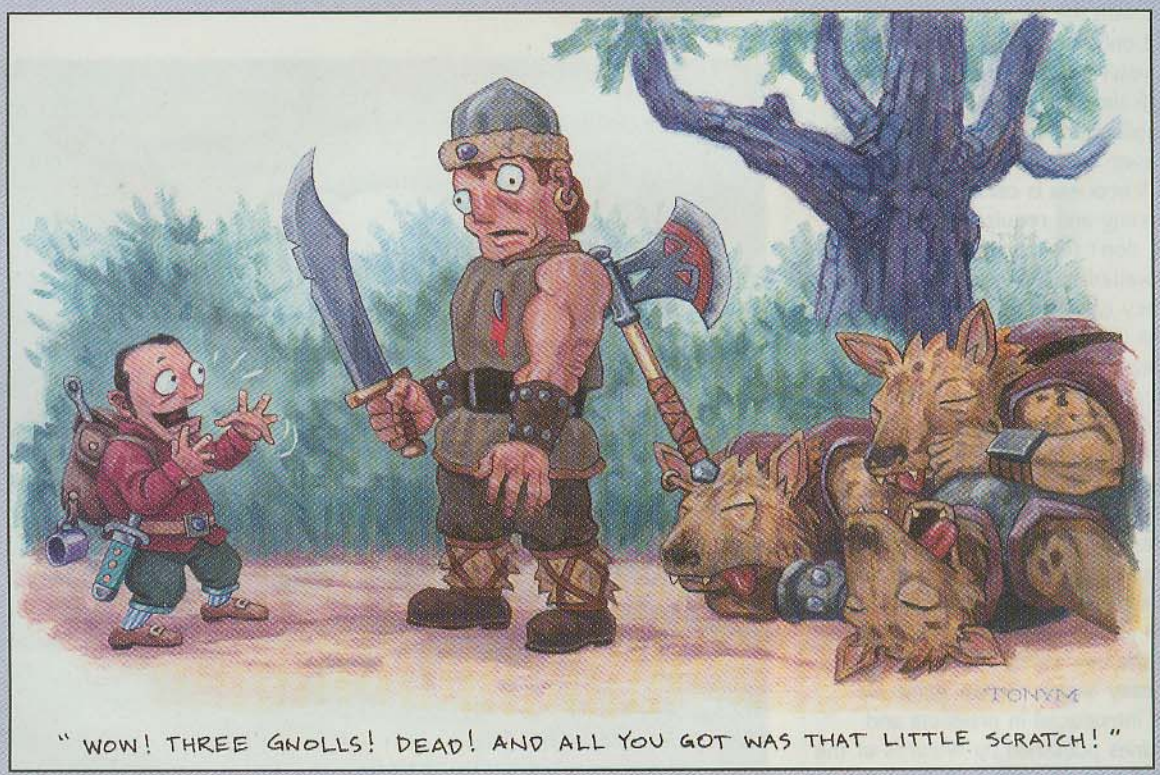
The new edition gives you more tools to work with, but it's worth noting that the new approach has a particularly interesting repercussion. The new, meatier rules spell out a comprehensive set of modifiers, difficulty classes, and special situations in great detail. Although its much easier to keep track of all these rules than it might seem, it's quite easy to forget a stray modifier or improperly compute a difficulty class here and there in the heat of the moment. What makes this a problem is the fact that the players are often just as familiar with the rules as you are, and you'll find that many of them take great delight in pointing out each and every modifier or dice roll you blow. Many times, these protests come after you've already resolved the roll in question and moved on—sometimes long after. "Hey everybody! I just realized that when she killed my cohort in that last battle she forgot to take into account the penalty for fighting with two weapons!" Sometimes these lapses might seem so egregious that your sense of fairness will tempt you to "back up" the game and replay the situation. In fact, I found myself in this position so often during the early test games I ran using the new rules that I was inspired to debut a Fifth Rule of Dungeoncraft.

IT'S QUITE EASY TO FORGET A STRAY MODIFIER OR IMPROPERLY COMPUTE A DIFFICULTY CLASS IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT.

THE FIFTH RULE OF DUNGEONCRAFT

What's done is done.

Once a roll has been made and you've moved on, you should never reset events to an earlier state in order to correct a mistake. Doing so can only interrupt the game's momentum and runs the risk of confusing your players. If you need to rationalize such a deci-



sion, put it down to fickle fate—a lucky (or unlucky) break caused by potent karma or the intervention of capricious gods. After all, in the real world unusual and unexplainable things happen all the time. In fact, you might even use a particularly significant gaffe as a springboard for an adventure that explains the error. With that big (but forgotten) modifier in his favor, how could Lokir have possibly missed when he attacked that hill giant? If the blow had connected, Lokir might have killed the giant in time to save Mokk, his fallen comrade! A few adventures later, maybe Lokir discovers that he accidentally offended the high priest of a war god on one of his previous exploits and the god has since cursed him with horrible luck in battle. To remove the curse, Lokir must right his earlier wrong and beg for the high priest's forgiveness.

ONCE PLAY HAS MOVED ON, ALL OUTCOMES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FINAL.

Of course, the Fifth Rule doesn't imply that you should never accept a player's advice on how to resolve a situation or refuse to acknowledge any forgotten modifiers pointed out by the players before the dice are rolled. The fact that you can count on your players to be on the lookout for modifiers you've forgotten is one of the reasons why it's easier to keep track of the new rules than it might seem. Once a situation has been resolved and play has moved on, though, all outcomes should be considered final. Although some players might find this stance a bit difficult to deal with at first, they'll quickly get used to it as long as you're consistent.

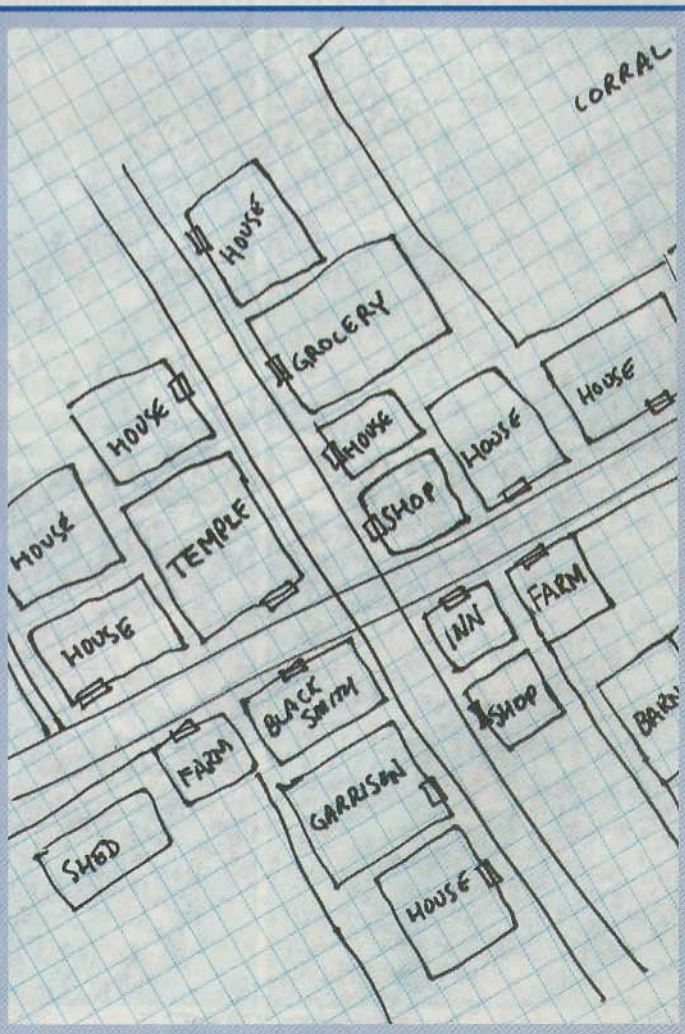
Well, that wraps up another installment. More thoughts on the new-edition next month.

Dear Dungeoncraft,
I have a problem drawing maps. I try to draw maps that look like those that appear in *Dungeon Magazine* and the various D&D products in my collection, but I always fall short. My layouts are dull, my drawings are sloppy, and my diagrams are ugly. Any pointers?

– Frustrated in Fresno

Dear Frustrated,
First, you shouldn't be using the maps that appear in the various official D&D products as your ultimate yardstick. Those maps look so good because they're drawn by professionals—folks who were hired because they are unusually good at drawing maps. Concentrate on making your maps useful, not pretty. As long as you can clearly make out the sizes and shapes of your various rooms as well as the entrances and exits, you're in business. A map like the one here is perfectly usable.

As for layouts and such, if you're just not finding inspiration, it's time to turn to one of the many unwritten Rules of Dungeoncraft: If you can't create it yourself, steal it. In this case, you've already admitted that you have some copies of *Dungeon Magazine* and some old D&D products lying around. Why not use their maps? You don't have to use the attached adventures or keys, just the maps themselves. Believe me, if your "Terror Caverns of Tharn" were once D&D's "Slave Pits of the Undercity," your players will never know the difference.



WHAT'S NEW
WITH PHIL AND DIXIE
TODAY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT DWARVES, WHO ARE FAMOUS AS MINERS, SMITHS, AND IRRITABLE SHORT PEOPLE.
HEY! WE'RE NOT ALL MINERS!
I'M A PETROLEUM SURVEYOR.
SHAFT 15
THEY'RE ALSO FAMOUS AS GATHERERS OF TREASURE!
OY! I'M WORKING HERE!
WE'RE CLOSER TO THE GROUND. WE SEE STUFF YOU TALL GUYS MISS. YOU WANT ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR?
I WANT THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG! IT ALLOWS THE WEARER TO RULE THE UNIVERSE!!
I THOUGHT IT JUST MADE YOU INVISIBLE.
OH THAT WAS JUST SOME CHEAP KNOCK-OFF.
OH YEAH— THE OLD RHINEGOLD THING! HERE YOU ARE.
YOU'RE GIVING HER A 'RULE THE UNIVERSE FREE' RING? ARE YOU INSANE?!
IT'S FREE BECAUSE IT'S USELESS. YOU CAN'T WEAR IT UNLESS YOU RENOUNCE LOVE.
JEEZ - DON'T KIDS LISTEN TO OPERA ANYMORE?
©Foglio
BWAHAHAHA! WRONG!! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS RENOUNCE LOVE WHILE YOU WEAR THE RING-?
BUT... BUT... THAT'S CHEATING!
sigh
YOUR POINT?
OOOH - I'M TELLING!
DO IT FAST, PEEWEE, BECAUSE TOTAL COSMIC POWER IS NOW MINE!
FIRST I'LL DECLARE MYSELF RULER OF EARTH! THEN I'LL—
-HAVE SOME CAKE, OH QUEEN?
OOH! BLACK FOREST CAKE! I LOVE BLACK FOREST CAKE!
NO! I MEAN—!
PEFT!
THAT IS NOT HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO WORK!!
SO - YOU DON'T WANT ANY CAKE?
HEY - MORE FOR US!
YEAH!
END
www.studiofoglio.com

It's All In Your Hands Now!

The experts have spoken. Now you can create the RPG game you've always wanted. RPG Maker gives you all the game design tools imaginable to construct the masterpiece role-playing adventure you've always dreamed of – and *you* get all the creative credit!

Tap your innermost creativity and immerse yourself by creating dungeons, monsters, and spells, then craft it all into an epic story.

The real bonus: Challenge your friends to beat a game *you* personally designed.

"One of the coolest ideas for a game ever..."
- EGM

"Ultimately, it's one of those 'If you only buy one game a year, make it this one' games..."
- GameFan

- **Be the DM of your dream RPG**
- **Use more than 400 dungeon components**
- **68 character choices; each present 16 special abilities**
- **Anime Maker tool lets players create & animate characters from scratch**

"All in all, this is one game that's both immersive and fun, making it a must-have for anyone creating their own games."
-PSM – 100% Independent PlayStation Magazine

Agetec, Inc., 1070 Stewart Drive, Suite 4, Sunnyvale, CA 94085. ©1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 ASCII CO./Kousan Kagaku/SUCCESS/SPRAIN Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. RPG Maker and RPG Maker logo are registered trademarks of ASCII CO. Published by Agetec, Inc. All other brand and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. Agetec and the Agetec logo are trademarks of Agetec, Inc.
Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment America for use with the PlayStation game console. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Manufactured and printed in the U.S.A.
THIS SOFTWARE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PLAYSTATION GAME CONSOLES WITH THE NTSC U/C DESIGNATION. U.S. AND FOREIGN PATENTS PENDING.

agetec
agetec.com

EVERYONE E Mild Animated Violence ESRB

PlayStation

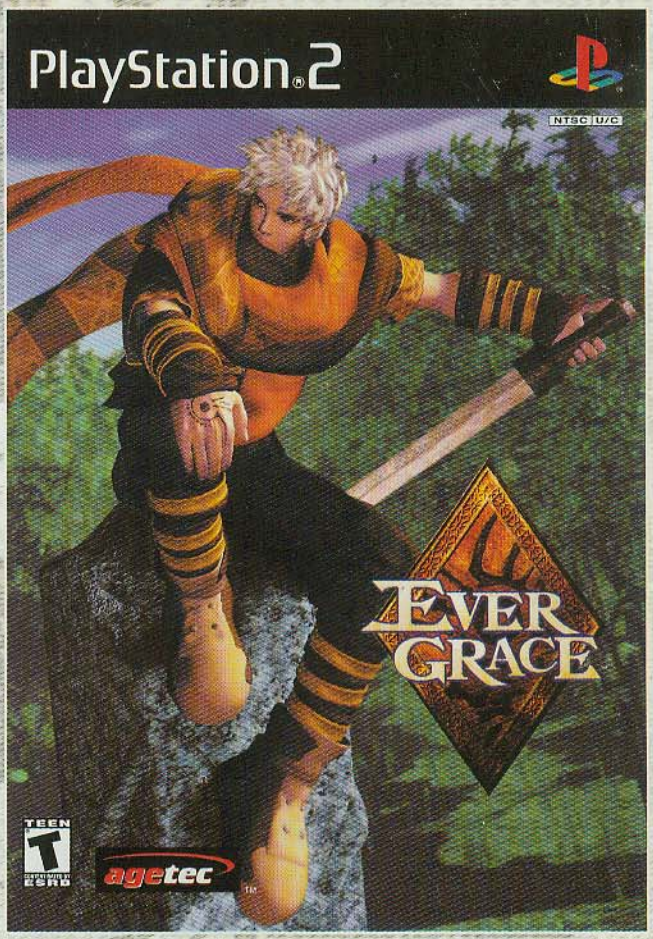
Defeat Your Fears To Achieve Grace

Players enter a world of intense magic and thunderous battles – where your survival is determined by collecting powerful artifacts and fashioning them to unique armor and weaponry. Two complete adventures await Darius and Sharline – heroes who must face an evil reborn. Journey as either hero and discover unique characters and monsters for each adventurer. They will need to master the art of arming themselves with items of incredible might and untold magical abilities to thwart the powers of darkness.

Attack with unique Palmira armaments

Utilize many bizarre weapons to wipe out enemies

Face evil in its lair



"Expect gorgeous special effects and plenty of action."
– PS Extreme

Destroy foes everywhere you journey

- Customizable elements include weaponry, armor, and clothing.
- Certain combinations of armor and clothing unlock hidden magical abilities and powers.
- Two independent characters to play – each with their own storylines, goals, and discoveries.
- Epic RPG storyline with all the action needed for a legendary quest.

Magnificent graphic and lighting effects

Challenge ultra-strange creatures to the bitter end

FROMSOFTWARE™

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

agetec™

© 2000 From Software, Inc. From Software and the From Software logo are trademarks of From Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Agetec, the Agetec logo, EverGrace and the EverGrace logo, are trademarks of Agetec, Inc. PlayStation and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.